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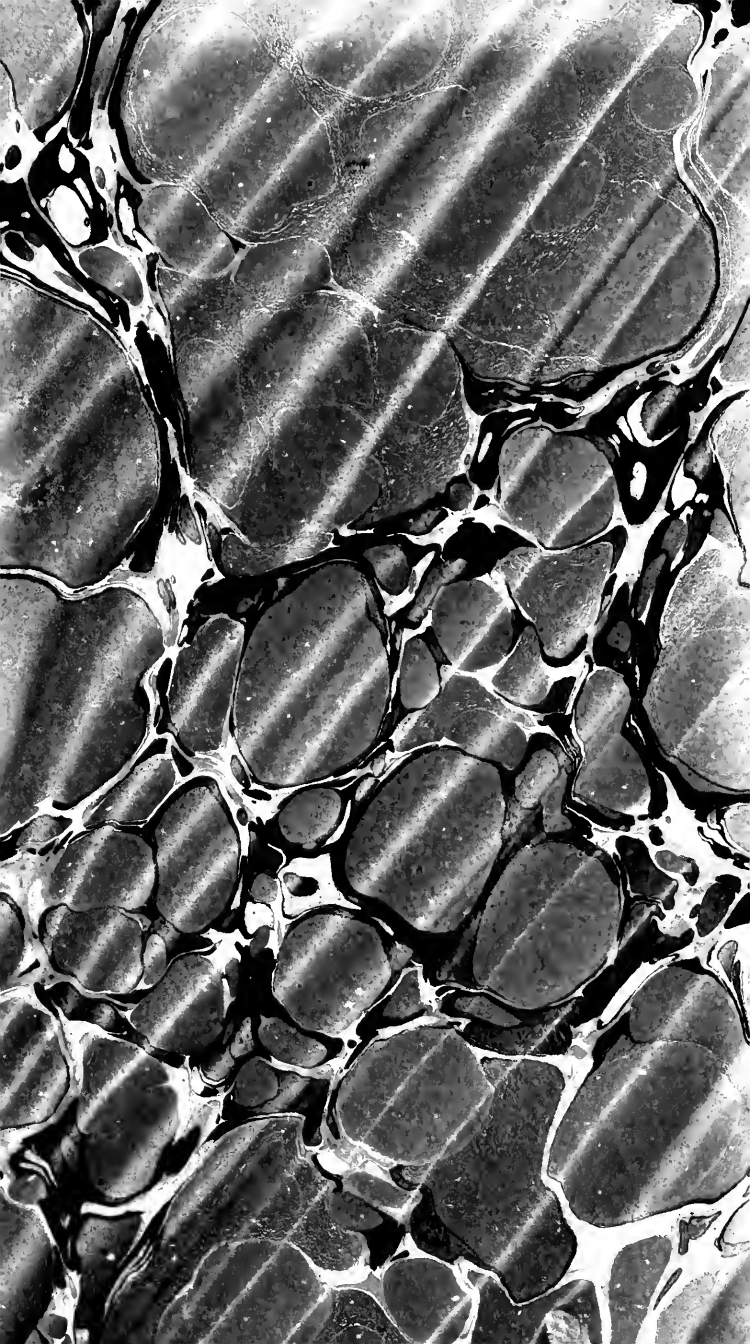


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VISITS AND SKETCHES

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

VOL. III.

VISITS AND SKETCHES

AT HOME AND ABROAD

WITH

TALES AND MISCELLANIES NOW FIRST COLLECTED.

BY MRS. JAMESON.

AUTHOR OF "THE CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN," "LIVES OF
CILBERATED FEMALE SOVEREIGNS," &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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1834

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Page 42, line 5, *for* the full stop *read* a comma, and *for* she had
read having.

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MRS. SIDDONS.

VOL. III.

B

[The following little sketch was written a few days after the death of Mrs. Siddons, and was called forth by certain paragraphs which appeared in the daily papers. A misapprehension of the real character of this remarkable woman, which I know to exist in the minds of many who admired and venerated her talents, has induced me to enlarge the first very slight sketch, into a more finished but still inadequate portrait. I have spared no pains to verify the truth of my own conception by testimony of every kind that was attainable. I have penned every word as if I had been in that great final court where the thoughts of all hearts are manifested ; and those who best knew the individual I have attempted to delineate bear witness to the fidelity of the portrait, as far as it goes. I must be permitted to add, that in this and the succeeding sketch I have not only been inspired by the wish to do justice to individual virtue and talent,—I wished to impress and illustrate that important truth, that a gifted woman may pursue a public vocation, yet preserve the purity and maintain the dignity of her sex—that there is no prejudice which will not shrink away before moral energy, and no profession which may not be made compatible with the respect due to us as women, the cultivation of every feminine virtue, and the practice of every private duty. I might here multiply examples and exceptions, and discuss causes and results ; but it is a consideration I reserve for another opportunity.]

MRS. SIDDONS

“ *Implora pace !* ”—She, who upon earth ruled the souls and senses of men, as the moon rules the surge of waters ; the acknowledged and liege empress of all the realms of illusion ; the crowned queen ; the throned muse ; the sceptred shadow of departed genius, majesty, and beauty,—supplicates—*Peace !*

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What unhallowed work has been going forward in some of the daily papers since this illustrious creature has been laid in her quiet unostentatious grave ! ay, even before her poor remains were cold ! What pains have been taken to cater trifling scandal for the blind, heartless, gossip-loving vulgar ! and to throw round the memory of a woman, whose private life was as irreproachable as her public career was glorious, some ridiculous or unamiable association which should tend to unsphere her from her throne in our imagination, and degrade from her towering pride of place, the heroine of Shakspeare, and the Muse of Tragedy !

That stupid malignity which revels in the martyrdom of fame—which rejoices when, by some approximation of the mean and ludicrous with the beautiful and sublime, it can for a moment bring down the rainbow-like glory in which the fancy invests genius, to the drab-coloured level of me-

diocrity—is always hateful and contemptible ; but in the present case it is something worse ; it has a peculiar degree of *cowardly* injustice. If some elegant biographer inform us that the same hand which painted the infant Hercules, or Ugolino, or Mrs. Sheridan, half seraph and half saint—could clutch a guinea with satisfaction, or drive a bargain with a footman ; if some discreet friend, from the mere love of truth, no doubt, reveal to us the puerile, lamentable frailties of that bright spirit which poured itself forth in torrents of song and passion : what then ? 'tis pitiful, certainly, wondrous pitiful ; but there is no great harm done,—no irremediable injury inflicted ; for there stand their works : the poet's immortal page, the painter's breathing canvass witness for them. “ Death hath had no power yet upon *their* beauty ” —over *them* scandal cannot draw her cold slimy finger ;—on *them* calumny cannot breathe her mildew ; nor envy wither *them* with a blast from

hell. There they stand for ever to confute injustice, to rectify error, to defy malice ; to silence, and long outlive the sneer, the lie, the jest, the reproach. But *she*—who was of painters the model, the wonder, the despair ;—she, who realised in her own presence and person the poet's divinest dreams and noblest creations ;—she, who has enriched our language with a new epithet, and made the word *Siddonian* synonymous with all we can imagine of feminine grace and grandeur : she has left nothing behind her, but the memory of a great name : she has bequeathed it to our reverence, our gratitude, our charity, and our sympathy ; and if it is not to be sacred, I know not what is—or ever will be.

Mrs. Siddons, as an *artist*, presented a singular example of the union of all the faculties, mental and physical, which constitute excellence in her art, directed to the end for which they seemed created. In any other situation or profession, some one or other

of her splendid gifts would have been misplaced or dormant. It was her especial good fortune, and not less that of the time in which she lived, that this wonderful combination of mental powers and external graces, was fully and completely developed by the circumstances in which she was placed.* “ With the most commanding beauty of face and form, and varied grace of action ; with the most noble combination of features, and extensive capability of expression in each of them ; with an unequalled genius for her art, the utmost patience in study, and the strongest ardour of feeling ; there was not a passion which she could not delineate ; not the nicest shade, not the most delicate modification of passion, which she could not seize with philosophical accuracy, and render with such immediate force of nature and truth, as

* Some of the sentences which follow (marked by inverted commas,) are taken from a portrait of Mrs. Siddons, dated 1812, and attributed to Sir Walter Scott.

well as precision, that what was the result of profound study and unwearied practice, appeared like sudden inspiration. There was not a height of grandeur to which she could not soar, nor a darkness of misery to which she could not descend ; not a chord of feeling, from the sternest to the most delicate, which she could not cause to vibrate at her will. She had reached that point of perfection in art, where it ceases to be art, and becomes a second nature. She had studied most profoundly the powers and capabilities of language ; so that the most critical sagacity could not have suggested a delicacy of emphasis, by which the meaning of the author might be more distinctly conveyed, or a shade of intonation by which the sentiment could be more fully, or more faithfully expressed. While other performers of the past or present time, have made approaches to excellence, or attained it now and then, Mrs. Siddons alone was pronounced faultless ; and, in

her, the last generation witnessed what we shall not see in ours;—no, nor our children after us;—that amazing union of splendid intellectual powers, with unequalled charms of person, which, in the tragic department of her art, realized the idea of perfection.”

Such was the magnificent portrait drawn of Mrs. Siddons twenty years ago; and it will be admitted by those who remember her, and must be believed by those who do not, that in this case, eulogy could not wander into exaggeration, nor enthusiasm be exalted beyond the bounds of truth.

I have heard people most unreasonably surprised or displeased, because this exceeding dignity of demeanour was not confined to the stage, but was carried into private life. Had it been merely conventional,—a thing put on and put off,—it might have been so; but the grandeur of her mind, and the light of her glorious beauty, were

not as a diadem and robe for state occasions only ; her's was not only dignity of manner and person, it was moral and innate, and, I may add, hereditary. Mrs. Siddons, with all her graces of form and feature, her magnificence of deportment, her deep-toned, measured voice, and impressive enunciation, was in reality a softened reflection of her more stern, stately, majestic mother, whose genuine loftiness of spirit and of bearing, whose rare beauty, and imperious despotism of character, have often been described to me as absolutely awful,—even her children trembled in her presence.

“All the Kembles,” said Sir Thomas Lawrence, “have historical faces ;” and for several generations their minds seem to have been cast in a poetical mould. It has, however, been disputed, whether Mrs. Siddons possessed genius. Whether genius be exclusively defined as the creative and inventive faculty of the soul, or taken, in its usual acceptation, as “a mind of large general faculties, acci-

dentally determined to some particular direction," I think she did possess it in both senses. The grand characteristic of her mind was power, but it was power of a very peculiar kind: it was slowly roused—slowly developed—not easily moved; her perceptions were not rapid, nor her sensations quick; she required time for every thing,—time to think, time to comprehend, time to speak. There was nothing superficial about her; no vivacity of manner; to petty gossip she would not descend, and evil-speaking she abhorred; she cared not to shine in general conversation. Like some majestic "Argosie," bearing freight of precious metal, she was a-ground and cumbrous and motionless among the shallows of common life; but set her upon the deep waters of poetry and passion—there was her element—there was her reign. Ask her an opinion, she could not give it you till she had looked on the subject, and considered it on every side,—then you might trust to

it without appeal. Her powers, though not easily put in motion, were directed by an incredible energy ; her mind, when called to action, seemed to rear itself up like a great wave of the sea, and roll forwards with an irresistible force. This prodigious intellectual power was one of her chief characteristics. Another was *truth*, which in the human mind is generally allied with power. It is, I think, a mistaken idea, that habits of impersonation on the stage tend to impair the sincerity or the individuality of a character. If any injury is done in this way, it is by the continual and strong excitement of the vanity, the dependence on applause, which in time *may* certainly corrode away the integrity of the manner, if not of the mind. It is difficult for an admired actress not to be vain, and difficult for a very vain person to be quite unaffected, on or off the stage ; it is, however, certain that some of the truest, most natural persons I ever met with in my life, were

actresses. In the character of Mrs. Siddons, truth, and a reverence for truth, were commensurate with her vast power : Heaven is not farther removed from earth than she was from falsehood. Allied to this conscientious turn was her love of order. She was extremely punctual in all her arrangements ; methodical and exact in every thing she did ; circumstantial and accurate in all she said. In little and in great things, in the very texture and constitution of her mind, she was integrity itself : “ It was,” (said one of her most intimate friends,) “ a mind far above the average standard, not only in ability, but in moral and religious qualities ; that these should have exhausted themselves in the world of fiction, may be regretted in reference to her individual happiness, but she certainly exercised, during her *reign*, a most powerful moral influence :—she excited the nobler feelings and higher faculties of every mind which came in contact with her own. I speak with the deepest

sense of personal obligation : it was at a very early age that she repeated to me, in a manner and tone which left an indelible impression,

‘ Sincerity,

Thou first of virtues ! let no mortal leave

Thy onward path,’ &c.

and I never knew her to omit an opportunity of making her fine genius minister to piety and virtue.” Now what are the bravos of a whole theatre,

“ When all the thunder of the pit ascends,”

compared to such praise as this ?

“ Her mind ” (again I am enabled to give the very words of one who knew her well) “ was a perfect mirror of the sublime and beautiful ; like a lake that reflected only the heavens above, or the summits of the mountains around, nothing below a certain level could appear in it. The ideal was her vital air. She breathed with difficulty in the

atmosphere of this ‘working-day world,’ and withdrew from it as much as possible. Hence her moral principles were seldom brought to bear upon the actual and ordinary concerns of life. She was rather the associate of ‘the mighty dead,’ than the fellow-creature of the living. To the latter she was known chiefly through others, and often through those who were incapable of reflecting her qualities faithfully, though impressed with the utmost veneration for her genius. In their very anxiety for what they considered her interests, (and of her worldly interests she took *no charge*,) they would in her name authorize prudential arrangements, which gave rise to the suspicion of covetousness, whilst she was sitting rapt in heavenly contemplation. Had she given her mind to the consideration and investigation of relative claims, she might on some occasions have acted differently—or, rather, *she* would have acted

where in fact *others only* acted: for never, as I have reason to believe, was a case of distress *presented to her* without her being ready to give even till her ‘hand lacked means.’ Many of the poor in her neighbourhood were pensioned by her.

“She was credulous—simple—to an extraordinary degree. Profession had, therefore, too much weight with her. She was accustomed to *manifestations* of the sentiments she excited, and in seeking the demonstration sometimes overlooked the silent reality;—this was a consequence of her profession.

“She was not only exact in the performance of her religious duties; her religion was a pervading sentiment, influencing her to the strictest observance of truth and charity—I mean charity in judging others: the very active and excursive benevolence which

‘*Seeks the duty, nay, prevents the need,*’

would have been incompatible with her toilsome engrossing avocations and with the visionary tendencies of her character. But the visionary has his own sphere of action, and can often touch the master-springs of other minds, so as to give the first impulse to the good deeds flowing from *them*. There are some who can trace back to the sympathies which Mrs. Siddons awakened, their devotedness to the cause of the suffering and oppressed. Faithfully did she perform the part in life which she believed allotted to her; and who may presume to judge that she did not choose the better part?"

The idea that she was a cold woman is eminently false. Her affections, like her intellectual powers, were slow, but tenacious; they enveloped in folds, strong as flesh and blood, those whom she had found worthy and taken to her heart; and her happiness was more entwined with them than those who knew her only in her professional

character could have supposed ; she would return home from the theatre, every nerve thrilling with the excitement of sympathy, and applause, and admiration, and a cold look or word from her husband has sent her to bed in tears. She had that sure indication of a good heart and a fine mind, an exceeding love for children, and a power to attract and amuse them. It was remarked that her voice always softened in addressing a child. I remember a letter of her's relative to a young mother and her infant, in which, among other tender and playful things, she says, " I wonder whether Lady N— is as good a talker of baby-nonsense as I flatter myself *I* am !" A lady who was intimate with her, happening to enter her bedroom early one morning, found her with two of her little grand-children romping on her bed, and playing with the tresses of her long dark hair, which she had let down for their amusement. Her own children adored her ; her surviving friends refer to her

with tenderness, with gratitude, even with tears. I speak here of what I *know*. I have seldom been more touched to the heart than by the perusal of some of her *most* private letters and notes, which for tenderness of sentiment, genuine feeling, and simple yet forcible expression, could not be surpassed.* Actress though she was, she had no idea of doing any thing for the sake of appear-

* I am permitted to give the following little extract as farther illustrating that tenderness of nature which I have only touched upon. "I owe ——— a letter, but I don't know how it is, now that I am arrived at that time of life when I supposed I should be able to sit down and indulge my natural indolence, I find the business of it thickens and increases around me ; and I am now as much occupied about the affairs of others as I have been about my own. I am just now expecting my son George's two babies from India. The ship which took them from their parents, I thank heaven, is safely arrived : *Oh ! that they could know it !* For the present I shall have them near me. There is a school between my little hut and the church, where they will have delicious air, and I shall be able to see the poor dears every day."

ances, or of courting popularity by any means but excellence in her art. She loved the elegances and refinements of life—enjoyed, and freely shared what she had toiled to obtain—and in the earlier part of her career was the frequent victim of her own kind and careless nature. She has been known to give generously, nobly,—to sympathize warmly ; but did she deny to greedy selfishness or spendthrift vanity the twentieth demand on her purse or her benevolence ? Was she, while absorbed in her poetical, ideal existence, the dupe of exterior shows in judging of character ? Or did she, from total ignorance of, or indifference to, the common-place prejudices, or customary forms of society, unconsciously wound the *amour-propre* of some shallow flatterer or critic,—or by bringing the gravity and glory of her histrionic impersonations into the frivolities and hard realities of this our world, render herself obnoxious to vulgar ridicule ?—then was she made to feel what

it is to live in the public eye : then flew round the malignant slander, the vengeful lie, the base sneer, the impertinent misinterpretation of what few could understand and fewer feel ! Reach *her* these libels could not—but sometimes they reached those whose affectionate reverence fenced her round from the rude contact of real life. In some things Mrs. Siddons was like a child. I have heard anecdotes of her extreme simplicity, which by the force of contrast made me smile—at *them*, not at *her* : who could have laughed at Mrs. Siddons ? I should as soon have thought of laughing at the Delphic Sybil.

As an artist, her genius appears to have been slowly developed. She did not, as it has been said of her niece, “spring at once into the chair of the tragic muse ;” but toiled her way up to glory and excellence in her profession, through length of time, difficulties, and obstacles innumerable. She was exclusively professional ; and all

her attainments, and all her powers, seem to have been directed to one end and aim. Yet I suppose no one would have said of Mrs. Siddons, that she was a "*mere actress*," as it was usually said of Garrick, that he was a "*mere player*;"—the most admirable and versatile actor that ever existed; but still the mere player;—nothing more—nothing better. He does not appear to have had a tincture of that high gentlemanly feeling, that native elevation of character, and general literary taste which strike us in John Kemble and his brother Charles; nor any thing of the splendid imagination, the enthusiasm of art, the personal grace and grandeur, which threw such a glory around Mrs. Siddons. Of John Kemble it might be said,* as Dryden said of Harte in his time, that "kings and princes might have come to him, and taken lessons how to comport themselves with dignity."

* I believe it *has* been said; but, like Madlle. de Montpensier my imagination and my memory are sometimes confounded.

And with the noble presence of Mrs. Siddons, we associated in public and in private, something absolutely awful. We were accustomed to bring her before our fancy as one habitually elevated above the sphere of familiar life,—

“ Attired in all the majesty of art—
Crown'd with the rich traditions of a soul
That hates to have her dignity profan'd
By any relish of an earthly thought.”*

Who was it?—(I think Northcote the painter,) who said he had seen a group of young ladies of rank, Lady Fannys and Lady Marys, peeping through the half-open door of a room where Mrs. Siddons was sitting, with the same timidity and curiosity as if it had been some preternatural being,—much more than if it had been the queen: which I can easily believe. I remember that the first time I found myself in the same room with Mrs. Siddons, (I was then about

* Ben Jonson.

twenty,) I gazed on her as I should have gazed at one of the Egyptian pyramids—nay, with a deeper awe, for what is material and physical immensity, compared with moral and poetical grandeur? I was struck with a sensation which made my heart pause, and rendered me dumb for some minutes; and when I was led into conversation with her, my first words came faltering and thick,—which never certainly would have been the case in presence of the autocratrix of all the Russias. The greatest, the noblest in the land approached her with a deference not unmingled with a shade of embarrassment, while she stood in regal guise majestic, with the air of one who bestowed and never received honour.* Nor was this feeling of her power, which was derived, partly from her own peculiar dignity of deportment, partly from her association with all that was grand, poetical, terrible,

* George the Fourth, after conversing with her, said with emphasis, “She is the only *real* queen!”

confined to those who could appreciate the full measure of her endowments. Every member of that public, whose idol she was, from the greatest down to the meanest, felt it more or less. I knew a poor woman who once went to the house of Mrs. Siddons to be paid by her daughter for some embroidery. Mrs. Siddons happened to be in the room, and the woman perceiving who it was, was so overpowered, that she could not count her money, and scarcely dared to draw her breath. "And when I went away, ma'am," added she, in describing her own sensations, "I walked all the way down the street, feeling myself a great deal taller." This was the same unconscious feeling of the sublime, which made Bouchardon say that, after reading the Iliad, he fancied himself seven feet high.

She modelled very beautifully, and in this talent, which was in a manner intuitive, she displayed a creative as well as an imitative power.

Might we not say that in the peculiar character of her genius—in the combination of the *very* real with the *very* ideal, of the demonstrative and the visionary, of vastness and symmetry, of the massive material and the grand unearthly forms into which it shaped itself—there was something analogous to sculpture? At all events, it is the opinion of many who knew her, that if she had not been a great actress she would have devoted herself to sculpture. She was never so happy as when occupied with her modelling tools; she would stand at her work eight hours together, scarcely turning her head. Music she passionately loved: in her younger days her voice in singing was exquisitely sweet and flexible. She would sometimes compose verses, and sing them to an extemporaneous air; but I believe she did not perform on any instrument.

To complete this sketch I shall add an outline of her professional life.

Mrs. Siddons was born in 1755. She might be said, almost without metaphor, to have been “born on the stage.” All the family, I believe, for two or three generations, had been players. In her early life she endured many vicissitudes, and was acquainted with misery and hardship in many repulsive forms. On this subject she had none of the pride of a little mind; but alluded to her former situation with perfect simplicity. The description in Mrs. Inchbald’s *Memoirs* of “Mrs. Siddons singing and mending her children’s clothes,” is from the life, and charming as well as touching, when we consider her peculiar character and her subsequent destinies. She was in her twenty-first year when she made her first attempt in London, (for it was but an attempt,) in the character of Portia. She also appeared as Lady Anne in *Richard III.* and in comedy as Mrs. Strickland to Garrick’s *Ranger*. She was not successful: Garrick is said to have been jealous of her rising

powers: the public did not discover in her the future tragic muse, and for herself—"She felt that she was greater than she knew." She returned to her provincial career; she spent seven years in patient study, in reflection, in contemplation, and in mastering the practical part of her profession; and then she returned at the age of twenty-eight, and burst upon the world in the prime of her beauty and transcendent powers, with all the attributes of confirmed and acknowledged excellence.

It appears that, in her first season, she did not play one of Shakspeare's characters: she performed Isabella, Euphrasia, Jane Shore, Calista, and Zara. In a visit she paid to Dr. Johnson, at the conclusion of the season, she informed him that it was her intention, the following year, to bring out some of Shakspeare's heroines, particularly Katherine of Arragon, to which she *then* gave the preference as a character. Dr. Johnson agreed with

her, and added that, when she played Katherine, he would hobble to the theatre himself to see her ; but he did not live to pay her this tribute of admiration. He, however, paid her another not less valuable : describing his visitor after her departure, he said, “ she left nothing behind her to be censured or despised ; neither praise nor money, those two powerful corrupters of mankind, seem to have depraved her.”* In this interview she seems to have pleased the old critic and moralist, who was also a severe and acute judge of human nature, and not inclined to judge favourably of actresses, by the union of modesty with native dignity which at all times distinguished her ;—a rare union ! and most delightful in those who are the objects of the public gaze, and when the popular enthusiasm is still in all its first intoxicating effervescence.

The first of Shakspeare’s characters which Mrs.

* In a letter to Mrs. Thrale.

Siddons performed was Isabella, in *Measure for Measure*, (1784,) and the next *Constance*. In the same year Sir Joshua painted her as the tragic Muse.* With what a deep interest shall we now visit this her true apotheosis,—now that it has received its last consecration ! The rest of Shakspeare's characters followed in this order: *Lady Macbeth* in 1785, and, soon afterwards, as if by way of contrast, *Desdemona*, *Ophelia*, *Rosalind*. In 1786 she played *Imogen*; in 1788 *Katherine of Arragon*; and, in 1789, *Volumnia*; and in the same season she played *Juliet*, being then in her thirty-fifth year,—too old for *Juliet*; nor did this ever become one of her popular parts; she left it to her niece to identify herself for ever with the poetry and sensibility, the youthful grace and fervid passion of Shakspeare's *Juliet*; and we have as little chance of ever seeing such another

* In the Grosvenor gallery. There is a duplicate of this picture in the Dulwich gallery.

Juliet as Fanny Kemble, as of ever seeing such another Lady Macbeth as her magnificent aunt.

A good critic, who was also a great admirer of Mrs. Siddons, asserts that there must be something in acting which levels all poetical distinctions, since people talked in the same breath of her Lady Macbeth and Mrs. Beverley as being equally “fine pieces of acting.” I think he is mistaken. No one—no one at least but the most vulgar part of her audience—ever equalized these two characters, even as pieces of acting ; or imagined for a moment that the same degree of talent which sufficed to represent Mrs. Beverley could have grasped the towering grandeur of such a character as Lady Macbeth ;—dived into its profound and gloomy depths—seized and reflected its wonderful gradations—displayed its magnificence—developed its beauties, and revealed its terrors : no such thing. She might have drawn more tears in Isa-

bella than in Constance—thrown more young ladies into hysterics in Belvidera than in Katherine of Arragon ; but all with whom I have conversed on the subject of Mrs. Siddons, are agreed in this ; —that her finest characters, as pieces of art, were those which afforded the fullest scope for her powers, and contained in themselves the largest materials in poetry, grandeur, and passion : consequently, that her Constance, Katherine of Arragon, Volumnia, Hermione, and Lady Macbeth stood pre-eminent. In playing Jane de Montfort, in Joanna Baillie's tragedy, her audience almost lost the sense of impersonation in the feeling of identity. She *was* Jane de Montfort—the actress, the woman, the character, blended into each other. It is a mistaken idea that she herself preferred the part of Aspasia (in Rowe's Bajazet) to any of these grand impersonations. She spoke of it as one in which she had produced the most extraordinary effect on the *nerves* of her audience ;

and this is true. “I recollect,” said a gentleman to me, “being present at one of the last representations of *Bajazet*: and at the moment when the order is given to strangle *Moneses*, while *Aspasia* stands immoveable in front of the stage, I turned my head, unable to endure more, and to my amazement I beheld the whole pit staring ghastly, with upward faces, dilated eyes, and mouths wide open—gasping—fascinated. Nor shall I ever forget the strange effect produced by that sea of human faces, all fixed in one simultaneous expression of stony horror. It realized for a moment the fabled power of the *Medusa*—it was terrible!”

Of all her great characters, Lord Byron, I believe, preferred *Constance*, to which she gave the preference herself, and esteemed it the most difficult and the most finished of all her impersonations; but the general opinion stamps her *Lady Macbeth* as the grandest effort of

her art; and therefore, as she was the first in her art, as the *ne plus ultra* of acting. This at least was the opinion of one who admired her with all the fervour of a kindred genius, and could lavish on her praise of such “rich words composed as made the gift more sweet.” Of her Lady Macbeth, he says, “nothing could have been imagined grander,—it was something above nature; it seemed almost as if a being of a superior order had dropped from a higher sphere to awe the world with the majesty of her appearance. Power was seated on her brow, passion emanated from her breast as from a shrine. In coming on in the sleeping scene, her eyes were open, but their sense was shut; she was like a person bewildered: her lips moved involuntarily; all her gestures seemed mechanical—she glided on and off the stage like an apparition. To have seen her in that character was an event in every one’s life never to be forgotten.”

By profound and incessant study she had brought her conception and representation of this character to such a pitch of perfection that the imagination could conceive of nothing more magnificent or more finished ; and yet she has been heard to say, after playing it for thirty years, that she never read over the part without discovering in it something new ; nor ever went on the stage to perform it, without spending the whole morning in studying and meditating it, line by line, as intently as if she were about to act it for the first time. In this character she bid farewell to her profession and the public, (June 29th, 1812.) The audience, on this occasion, paid her a singular and touching tribute of respect. On her going off in the sleeping scene, they commanded the curtain to fall, and would not suffer the play to proceed.*

* She afterwards played Lady Randolph for Mr. Charles Kemble's benefit, and performed Lady Macbeth at the request of the Princess Charlotte in 1816. This was her final appearance. She

The idea that Mrs. Siddons was quite unmoved by the emotions she portrayed—the sorrows and the passions she embodied with such inimitable skill and truth, is altogether false. Fine acting may accidentally be mere impulse ; it never can be wholly mechanical. To a late period of her life she continued to be strongly, sometimes painfully, excited by her own acting ; the part of Constance always affected her powerfully—she invariably left the stage, her face streaming with tears ; and after playing Lady Macbeth, she could not sleep : even after reading the play of Macbeth a feverish, wakeful night was generally the consequence.

was then sixty-one, and her powers unabated. I recollect a characteristic passage in one of her letters relating to this circumstance : she says, “The princess honoured me with several gracious (not *graceful*) nods ; but the newspapers gave me credit for much more *sensibility* than I either felt or displayed on the occasion. I was by no means so much *overwhelmed* by her Royal Highness’s kindness, as they were pleased to represent me.”

I am not old enough to remember Mrs. Siddons in her best days; but, judging from my own recollections, I should say that, to hear her *read* one of Shakspeare's plays, was a higher, a more complete gratification, and a more astonishing display of her powers than her performance of any single character. On the stage she was the perfect actress; when she was reading Shakspeare, her profound enthusiastic admiration of the poet, and deep insight into his most hidden beauties, made her almost a poetess, or at least, like a priestess, full of the god of her idolatry. Her whole soul looked out from her regal brow and effulgent eyes; and then her countenance!—the inconceivable flexibility and musical intonations of her voice! there was no got-up illusion here: no scenes—no trickery of the stage; there needed no sceptred pall—no sweeping train, nor any of the gorgeous accompaniments of tragedy:—SHE was Tragedy! When in reading Macbeth she said, “give me the

daggers!" they gleamed before our eyes. The witch scenes in the same play she rendered awfully terrific by the magic of looks and tones; she invested the weird sisters with all their own infernal fascinations; they were the serious, poetical, tragical personages which the poet intended them to be, and the wild grotesque horror of their enchantments made the blood curdle. When, in *King John*, she came to the passage beginning—

“If the midnight bell,

Did with his iron tongue and brazen note,” &c.

I remember I felt every drop of blood pause, and then run backwards through my veins with an overpowering awe and horror. No scenic representation I ever witnessed produced the hundredth part of the effect of her reading *Hamlet*. This tragedy was the triumph of her art. *Hamlet* and his mother, *Polonius*, *Ophelia*, were all there before us. Those who ever heard her give *Ophelia's* reply to *Hamlet*,

Hamlet. I loved you not.

Ophelia. I was the more deceived !

and the lines—

And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,

That suck'd the honey of his music vows, &c.

will never forget their exquisite pathos. What a revelation of love and woe was there!—the very heart seemed to break upon the utterance.

Lear was another of her grandest efforts ; but her rare talent was not confined to tragedy ; none could exceed her in the power to conceive and render witty and humorous character. I thought I had never understood or felt the comic force of such parts as Polonius, Lucio, Gratiano, and Shakspeare's clowns, till I heard the dialogue from her lips : and to hear her read the Merchant of Venice and As You Like It, was hardly a less perfect treat than to hear her read Macbeth.

The following short extract from a letter of Mrs. Joanna Baillie, dated about a year before the

death of Mrs. Siddons will, I am persuaded, be read with a double interest, for *her* sake who penned it, not less than hers who is the subject of it.

“The most agreeable thing I have to begin with, is a visit we paid last week to Mrs. Siddons. We had met her at dinner at Mr. Rogers’s a few days before, and she kindly asked us, our host and his sister, the Thursday following; an invitation which we gladly accepted, though we expected to see much decay in her powers of expression, and consequently to have our pleasure mingled with pain. Judge then of our delight when we heard her read the best scenes of *Hamlet*, with expression of countenance, voice, and action, that would have done honour to her best days! She was before us as an unconquerable creature, over whose astonishing gifts of nature time had no power.* She complained of her voice, which

* “For time hath laid his hand so gently on her

As he too had been awed.”

DE MONTFORT.

she said was not obedient to her will ; but it appeared to my ear to be peculiarly true to nature, and the more so, because it had lost that deep solemnity of tone which she, perhaps, had considered as an excellence. I thought I could trace in the pity and tenderness, mixed with her awe of the ghost, the natural feelings of one who had lost dear friends, and expected to go to them soon ; and her reading of that scene, (the noblest which dramatic art ever atchieved,) went to my heart as it had never done before. At the end, Mr. Rogers very justly said, ‘ Oh, that we could have assembled a company of young people to witness this, that they might have conveyed the memory of it down to another generation !’ In short, we left her full of admiration, as well as of gratitude, that she had made such an exertion to gratify so small an audience ; for, exclusive of her own family, we were but five.”

She continued to exercise her power of reading

and reciting long after the date of this letter, even till within a few days of her death, although her health had long been in a declining state.* She died at length on the 8th of June, 1831, after a few hours of acute suffering. She had lived nearly seventy-six years, of which forty-six were spent in the constant presence and service of the public. She was an honour to her profession, which was more honoured and honourable in her person and family than it ever was before, or will be hereafter, till the stage becomes something very different from what it now is.

And, since it has pleased some writers, (who apparently knew as little of her real situation as of her real character,) to lament over the *misfortune* of this celebrated woman, in having survived all her children, &c. &c. it may be interesting to add that, a short time before her

* The last play she read aloud was Henry V. only ten days before she died.

death, she was seated in a room in her own house, when about thirty of her young relatives, children, grand-children, nephews and nieces, were assembled, and looked on while they were dancing, with great and evident pleasure: and that her surviving daughter, Cecilia Siddons,* who had been, for many years, the inseparable friend and companion of her mother, attended upon her with truly filial devotion and reverence to the last moment of existence. Her admirers may, therefore, console themselves with the idea that in “love, obedience, troops of friends,” as well as affluence and fame, she had “all that should accompany old age.” She died full of years and honours; having enjoyed, in her long life, as much glory and prosperity as any mortal could expect: having imparted more intense and general pleasure than ever mortal did; and having paid the tribute of mortality in such suffering and sorrow as wait on the

* Now Mrs. George Combe.

widowed wife and the bereaved mother. If with such rare natural gifts were blended some human infirmities;—if the cultivation of the imaginative far above the perceptive faculties, hazarded her individual happiness;—if in the course of a professional career of unexampled continuance and splendour, the love of praise ever degenerated into the appetite for applause;—if the worshipped actress languished out of her atmosphere of incense,—is this to be made matter of wonder or of ill-natured comment? Did ever any human being escape more *intacte* in person and mind from the fiery furnace of popular admiration? Let us remember the severity of the ordeal to which she was exposed; the hard lot of those who pass their lives in the full-noon glare of public observation, where every speck is noted! What a difference too, between the aspiration after immortality and the pursuit of celebrity!—The noise of distant and future fame is like the sound of the

far-off sea, and the mingled roll of its multitudinous waves, which, as it swells on the ear, elevates the soul with a sublime emotion ; but present and loud applause, flung continually in one's face, is like the noisy dash of the surf upon the rock,—and it requires the firmness of the rock to bear it.

SKETCHES OF
FANNY KEMBLE
IN JULIET.

INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

TO

MR. JOHN HAYTER'S SKETCHES OF FANNY KEMBLE,

IN THE CHARACTER OF JULIET.*

“ Non piace a lei che innumerabil turba
Viva in atto di fuor, morta di dentro,
Le applauda a caso, e mano a man percuota ;
Ne si rallegra se le rozzi voci
Volgano a lei quelle infiniti lodi —
——Ma la possanza del divino ingegno
Vita di dentro.”

Gasparo Gozzi—Sermone xiv.

It would be doing an injustice to the author of these sketches, and something worse than injustice to her who is the subject of them, should more be expected than the pencil could possibly convey, and

* These sketches, once intended for publication, are now in the possession of Lord Francis Egerton. The introduction and notes were written in March, 1830—the conclusion in March, 1834.

more required than the artist ever intended to execute. Their merit consists in their fidelity, as far as they go; their interest in conveying a lively and distinct idea of some immediate and transient effects of grace and expression. They do not assume to be portraits of Miss Kemble; they are merely a series of rapid outlines, caught from her action, and exhibiting, at the first glance, just so much of the individual and peculiar character she has thrown into her impersonation of Juliet, as at once to be recognised by those who have seen her. To them alone these isolated passages—linked together in the imagination by all the intervening graces of attitude and sentiment, by the recollection of a countenance where the kindled soul looks out through every feature, and of a voice whose tones tremble into one's very heart—will give some faint reflection of the effect produced by the whole of this beautiful piece of acting,—or rather of nature, for here “each seems either.” It will be

allowed, even by the most enthusiastic lover of painting, that the merely imitative arts can do but feeble justice to the powers of a fine actress; for what graphic skill can fix the evanescent shades of feeling as they melt one into another?—

“What fine chisel could ever yet cut breath?”

—and yet even those who have not witnessed and may never witness Miss Kemble’s performance, to whom her name alone can be borne through long intervals of space and time, will not regard these little sketches without curiosity and interest. If any one had thought of transferring to paper a connected series of some of the awe-commanding gestures of Mrs. Siddons in one of her great parts; or caught (flying) some of the inimitable graces of movement and attitude, and sparkling effects of manner, with which Mrs. Charles Kemble once enchanted the world, with what avidity would they now be sought!—they would have served as

studies for their successors in art to the end of time.

All the fine arts, poetry excepted, possess a limited range of power. Painting and sculpture can convey none of the graces that belong to movement and sound : music can suggest vague sentiments and feelings, but it cannot express incident, or situation, or form, or colour. Poetry alone grasps an unlimited sceptre, rules over the whole visible and intellectual universe, and knows no bounds but those of human genius. And it is here that tragic acting, considered in its perfection, and in its relation to the fine arts, is allied to poetry, or rather is itself living, breathing poetry ; made sensible in a degree to the hardest and dullest minds, seizing on the dormant sympathies of our nature, and dismissing us again to the cares of this “ working-day world,” if not very much wiser, or better, or happier, at least enabled to digest with less bitterness the mixture of our good and evil days.

But in the midst of the just enthusiasm which a great actor or actress excites, so long as they exist to minister to our delight ;—in the midst of that atmosphere of light and life they shed around them, it is a common subject of repining that such glory should be so transient ; that an art requiring in its perfection such a rare combination of mental and external qualities, can leave behind no permanent monument of its own excellence, but must depend on the other fine arts for all it can claim of immortality : that Garrick, for instance, has become a name—no more—his fame the echo of an echo ! that Mrs. Siddons herself has bequeathed to posterity only a pictured semblance ;—that when the voice of Pasta is heard no longer upon earth, the utmost pomp of words can only attest her powers ! The painter and the poet, struggling through obscurity to the heights of fame, and consuming a life in the pursuit of (perhaps) posthumous celebrity, may say to the sublime actress,—“ Thou

in thy generation hast had thy meed ; we have waited patiently for ours : thou art vanished like a lost star from the firmament, into the ‘ uncomfortable night of nothing ’ ; we have left the light of our souls behind us, and survive to ‘ blessings and eternal praise ! ’ ” And why should it *not* be so ? Were it otherwise, the even-handed distribution of the best gifts of Heaven among favoured mortals might with reason be impugned. Shall the young spirit “ dampt by the necessity of oblivion ” disdain what is attainable because it cannot grasp all ? Conceive for a moment the situation of a woman, in the prime and bloom of existence, with all her youthful enthusiasm, her unworn feelings fresh about her, privileged to step forth for a short space out of the bounds of common life, without o’erstepping the modesty of her feminine nature, permitted to cast off for a while, unproved and unrestrained, the conventional trammels of form and manner ; and called upon to realise in her own

presence and person the divinest dreams of poetry and romance ; to send forth in a word—a glance,—the electric flash which is felt through a thousand bosoms at once, till every heart beats the same measure with her own ! Is there nothing in all this to countervail the dangers, the evils, and the vicissitudes attendant on this splendid and public exercise of talent ? It may possibly become, in time, a thing of habitude ; it *may* be degraded into a mere *besoin de l'amour propre*—a necessary, yet palling excitement : but in its outset it is surely a triumph far beyond the mere intoxication of personal vanity ; and to the very last, it must be deemed a magnificent and an enviable power.

It was difficult to select for graphic delineation any particular points from Miss Kemble's representation of Juliet. These drawings may not, perhaps, justify the enthusiasm she excited : but it ought to add to their value rather than detract from it, that the causes of their imperfection comprehend

the very foundation on which the present and future celebrity of this young actress may be said to rest. In the first place, the power by which she seized at once on public admiration and sympathy, was not derived from any thing external. It was not founded in the splendour of her hereditary pretensions, though in them there was much to fascinate: nor in the departed or fading glories of her race: nor in the remembrance of her mother—once the young Euphrosyne of our stage: nor in the name and high talent of her father, with whom, it was *once* feared the poetical and classical school of acting was destined to perish from the scene: nor in any mere personal advantages, for in these she has been excelled,—

“ Though on her eyelids many graces sit

Under the shadow of those even brows:”

nor in her extreme youth, and delicacy of figure, which tell so beautifully in the character of Juliet: nor in the acclaim of public favour—

“ To have all eyes

Dazzled with admiration, and all tongues

Shouting loud praises ; to rob every heart

Of love—

This glory round about her hath thrown beams .”

But *such* glory has circled other brows ere now, and left them again “ shorn of their beams.” No ! her success was founded on a power superior to all these—in the power of genius superadded to that moral interest which claimed irresistibly the best sympathies of her audience. The peculiar circumstances and feelings which brought Miss Kemble before the public, contrary (as it is understood) to all the previous wishes and intentions of her parents, were such as would have justified less decided talent,—honourable to herself and to her family. The feeling entertained towards her on this score was really delightful ; it was a species of homage, which, like the quality of mercy, was “ twice blessed ;” blessing those who gave and her

who received. It produced a feeling between herself and the public, which mere admiration on the one hand, and gratified vanity on the other, could not have excited. She strongly felt this, and no change, no reverse, diminished her feeling of the kindness with which she had once been received ; but her own fervid genius and sensibility did as much for her. She was herself a poetess ; her mind claimed a natural affinity with all that is feeling, passionate, and imaginative ; not her voice only, but her soul and ear were attuned to the harmony of verse ; and hence she gave forth the poetry of such parts as Juliet and Portia with an intense and familiar power, as though every line and sentiment in Shakspeare had been early transplanted into her heart,—had long been brooded over in silence,—watered with her tears,—to burst forth at last, like the spontaneous and native growth of her own soul. An excellent critic of our own day has said, that “poetical en-

thusiasm is the rarest faculty among players :” if so, it cannot be too highly valued. Fanny Kemble possessed this rare faculty ; and in it, a power that cannot be taught, or analysed, or feigned, or put on and off with her tragic drapery ; —it pervaded all she was called upon to do. It was *this* which in the Grecian Daughter made her look and step so like a young Muse ; which enabled her, by a single glance—a tone—a gesture—to elevate the character far above the language—and exalt the most common-place declamation into power and passion. The indisputable fact, that she appeared on the stage without any previous study or tuition, ought in justice to her to be generally known ; it is most certain that she was not nineteen when she made her first appearance, and that six weeks before her debüt there was no more thought of her becoming an actress, than of her becoming an empress. The assertion must appear superfluous to those

who have seen her ; for what teaching, or what artificial aids, could endue her with the advantages just described ?—“ unless *Philosophy* could make a Juliet !” or what power of pencil, though it were dipped in the rainbow and tempered in the sunbeams, could convey this bright intelligence, or justify the enthusiasm with which it is hailed by her audience ? There is a second difficulty which the artist has had to contend with, not less honourable to the actress : the charm of her impersonation of Juliet consisted not so much in any particular points, as in the general conception of the whole part, and in the sustained preservation and gradual development of the individual character, from the first scene to the last. Where the merit lies in the beautiful gradations of feeling, succeeding each other like waves of the sea, till the flood of passion swells and towers and sweeps away all perceptible distinctions, the pencil must necessarily be at fault ; for as Madame de Staël says truly, “ *l'inexprima-*

ble est précisément ce qu'un grand acteur nous fait connaître."

The first drawing is taken from the scene in which Juliet first appears. The actress has little to do, but to look the character;—that is, to convey the impression of a gentle, graceful girl, whose passions and energies lie folded up within her, like gathered lightning in the summer cloud; all her affections "soft as dew on roses," which must ere long turn to the fire-shower, and blast her to the earth. The moment chosen is immediately after Juliet's expostulation to her garrulous old nurse—"I pr'ythee, peace!"

The second, third, and fourth sketches are all from the masquerade scene. The manner in which Juliet receives the parting salutations of the guests has been justly admired;—nothing is denied to genius and taste, aided by natural grace, else it might have been thought impossible to throw so much meaning and sentiment into so

common an action. The first curtsey is to Benvolio. The second, to Mercutio, is distinctly marked, as though in him she recognised the chosen friend of Romeo. In the third, to Romeo himself, the bashful sinking of the whole figure, the conscious drooping of the eyelids, and the hurried, yet graceful recovery of herself as she exclaims—

“ Who’s he that follows there that would not dance ?

Go ask his name !”

which is the subject of the third sketch ; and lastly, the tone in which she gave the succeeding lines—

“ If he be married,

My grave is like to be my wedding-bed !”

which seems, in its deep quiet pathos, to anticipate “ some consequence yet hanging in the stars,”—form one unbroken series of the most beautiful and heartfelt touches of nature. The fourth

sketch is from the conclusion of the same scene, where Juliet, with reluctant steps and many a lingering look back on the portal through which her lover has departed, follows her nurse out of the banquet-room.

The two next drawings are from the balcony scene, which has usually been considered the criterion of the talent of an actress in this part. The first represents the action which accompanied the line—

“ By whose direction found'st thou out this place ?”

The second is the first “ Good night !”

“ Sweet, good night !

This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,

May prove a beauteous flower, when next we meet.”

Fanny Kemble's conception of character and sentiment in this scene was peculiarly and entirely her own. Juliet, as she properly felt, is a young impassioned Italian girl, who has

flung her heart, and soul, and existence upon one cast.

“ She was not made
Thro’ years or moons the inner weight to bear,
Which colder hearts endure till they are laid
By age in earth.”

In this view, the pretty coyness, the playful *coquetterie*, which has sometimes been thrown into the balcony scene, by way of making an effect, is out of place, and false to the poetry and feeling of the part : but in Fanny Kemble’s delineation, the earnest, yet bashful tenderness ; the timid, yet growing confidence ; the gradual swelling of emotion from the depths of the heart, up to that fine burst of enthusiastic passion---

“ Swear by thy gracious self,
That art the god of my idolatry,
And I’ll believe thee !”

were all as true to the situation and sentiment,

as they were beautifully and delicately conveyed. The whole of the speech, “Thou know’st the mask of night is on my face,” was in truth “like softest music to attending ears,” from the exquisite and various modulation of voice with which it was uttered. Perhaps one of the most beautiful and entirely original points in the whole scene, was the accent and gesture with which she gave the lines---

“Romeo, doff thy name ;

And for that name, which is no part of thee,

Take—all myself !”

The grace and *abandon* in the manner, and the softness of accent, which imparted a new and charming effect to this passage, cannot be expressed in words ; and it was so delicately touched, and so transitory,---so dependent, like a beautiful chord in music, on that which prepared and followed it, that it was found impossible to seize and fix it in a drawing.

From the first scene with the nurse, two drawings have been made. The idea of Juliet discovered as the curtain rises, gazing from the window, and watching for the return of her confidante, is perfectly new. The attitude (or more properly, one of her attitudes, for they are various as they are graceful and appropriate) is given in the seventh sketch, and the artist has conveyed it with peculiar grace and truth. The action chosen for the eighth drawing occurs immediately after Juliet's little moment of petulance, (so justly provoked,) and before she utters in a caressing tone, "Come, what says Romeo?" The first speech in this scene,

"O, she is lame! love's heralds should be thoughts,
Which ten times faster glide than the sun's beams,
Driving back shadows over low'ring hills:
Therefore do nimble-pinion'd doves draw love,
And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid—wings."

—and the soliloquy in the second scene of the third

act, "Gallop apace, ye fiery-footed steeds!" in which there is no particular point of dramatic effect to be made, are instances of that innate sense of poetical harmony, which enabled her to impart the most exquisite pleasure, merely by her feeling, graceful, animated delivery of these beautiful lines. The most musical intonation of voice, the happiest emphasis, and the utmost refinement, as well as the most expressive grace of action, were here combined to carry passion and poetry at once and vividly to the heart : but this perfect triumph of illusion is more than painting could convey.

The ninth and tenth sketches are from the second scene with the nurse, called in theatrical phrase "the Banishment Scene." One of the grandest and most impressive passages in the whole performance was Juliet's reply to her nurse.

" *Nurse.* Shame come to Romeo !

Juliet. Blister'd be thy tongue,

For such a wish ! he was not born to shame :

Upon his brow shame is asham'd to sit ;
For 'tis a throne where honour may be crown'd
Sole monarch of the universal earth."

The loftiness of look and gesture with which she pronounced the last line, cannot be forgotten : but the effect consisted so much in the action of the arm, as she stepped across the stage, and in the kindling eye and brow, rather than in the attitude only, that it could not well be conveyed in a drawing. The first point selected is from the passage, " O break, my heart !—poor bankrupt, break at once !" in which the gesture is full of expressive and pathetic grace. The tenth drawing represents the action which accompanied her exclamation, " Tybalt is dead—and Romeo—banished !" The tone of piercing anguish in which she pronounced the last word, *banished*, and then threw herself into the arms of her nurse, in all the helplessness of utter desolation, formed one of the finest passages in her performance.

The scene in which the lovers part, called the Garden Scene, follows; and the passage selected is--

“ Art thou gone so ? my love, my lord, my friend ?

I must hear from thee every day i' the hour !”

The subdued and tremulous intonation with which all the speeches in this scene were given, as though the voice were broken and exhausted with excessive weeping; and the manner in which she still, though half insensible in her nurse's arms, signed a last farewell to her husband, were among the most delicate and original beauties of the character.

The two next drawings are from the fifth scene of the third act. The latter part of this scene contained many new and beautiful touches of feeling which originated with Miss Kemble herself. It is here that the real character of Juliet is first developed;—it is here that, abandoned by the whole world, and left to struggle alone with her

fearful destiny, the high-souled and devoted woman takes place of the tender, trembling girl. The confiding, helpless anguish with which she at first throws herself upon her nurse—"Some comfort, nurse!"—the gradual relaxing of her embrace, as the old woman counsels her to forget Romeo and marry Paris—the tone in which she utters the question—

"Speakest thou from thy heart?"

Nurse. From my soul too,

Or else beshrew them both!"

And then the gathering up of herself with all the majesty of offended virtue, as she pronounces that grand "Amen!"—the effect of which was felt in every bosom—these were *revelations* of beauty and feeling which we owed to Fanny Kemble alone. They were points which had never before been felt or conveyed in the same manner. The shrinking up wholly into herself, and the concentrated scorn with which she uttered the lines—

“ Go, counsellor !

Thou and my bosom henceforth shall be twain !”

are very spiritedly given in the fourteenth drawing.

From the scene with the friar, in the fourth act, the action selected is where she grasps her poniard with the resolution of despair—

“ Give me some present counsel ; or, behold,
'Twixt my extremes and me this bloody knife
Shall play the umpire !”

One of the most original effects of feeling and genius in the whole play occurred in the course of this scene ; but, unfortunately, it was not found susceptible of graphic delineation. It was the peculiar manner with which she uttered the words—

“ Are you at leisure, holy father, now ?
Or shall I come to you at evening mass ?”

The question in itself is nothing ; but what a volume of misery and dread suspense was in that

look with which she turned from Paris to the friar, and the tone with which she uttered those simple words ! This was beyond the pencil's art to convey, and could but be felt and remembered. The next drawing is therefore from the scene in which she drinks the sleeping potion. The idea of speaking the first part of the soliloquy seated, and with the calmness of one settled and bent up "to act a dismal scene alone," until her fixed meditation on the fearful issue, and the horrible images crowding on her mind, work her up to gradual frenzy, was new, and originated with Miss Kemble. The attitude expressed in the drawing—"O look, methinks I see my cousin's ghost,"—was always hailed with an excess of enthusiasm of which I thought many parts of her performance far more deserving.

The eighteenth sketch is from the sleeping scene ; and the last two drawings are from the tomb scene. The merits of this last scene were

chiefly those of attitude, look, and manner; and the whole were at once so graceful and beautiful, as well as terribly impressive, that they afforded some relief from the horrors of the situation, and the ravings of Romeo. The alteration of Shakspeare, in the last act, is certainly founded on the historical tale of the *Giulietta*: but though the circumstances are borrowed, yet the spirit in which they are related by the ancient novelist, has not been taken into consideration by those who manufactured this additional scene of superfluous horror.* In Juliet's death, Miss Kemble seized an original idea, and worked it up with the most powerful and beautiful effect; but this effect consisted not so much in one attitude or look, as in a progressive series of action and expression, so

* The alteration and interpolations are by Garrick, of whom it was said and believed, that "he never read through a whole play of Shakspeare's except with some nefarious design of cutting and mangling it."

true—so painfully true, that as one of the chief beauties was the rapidity with which the whole passed from the fascinated yet aching sight—the artist has relinquished any attempt to fix it on paper.

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Fanny Kemble made her first appearance in the character of Juliet, October 6th, 1829, and bid a last farewell to her London audience in May, 1832: during these three years she played through a very diversified range of parts, both in tragedy and high comedy.* Sustained by her native

* She played in London the following parts successively:— Juliet, Belvidera, the Grecian Daughter, Mrs. Beverley, Portia, Isabella, Lady Townly, Calista, Bianca, Beatrice, Constance, Camiola, Lady Teazle, Donna Sol, (in Lord Francis Egerton's translation of Hemani, when played before the queen at Bridge-water House,) Queen Katherine, Catherine of Cleves, Louisa of Savoy, in Francis I., Lady Macbeth, Julia in the Hunch-back.

genius and good taste, and by the kindly feeling of her audience, she could not be said to have failed in any, not even in those which her inexperience and extreme youth rendered *premature*, to say the least. She never—except in one or two instances*—had a voice in the selection of her parts, which, I think, was in some cases exceedingly injudicious, as far as her individual powers were concerned. I know that she played in several contrary to her own opinion, taste, and judgment, and from a principle of duty. Not *duty* only, but a feeling of delicacy, natural to a generous mind,

* The only parts which, to my knowledge, she chose for herself, were Portia, Camiola, and Julia in the Hunchback. She was accused of having declined playing Inez de Castro in Miss Mitford's tragedy, and I heard her repel that accusation very indignantly. She added—"Setting aside my respect for Miss Mitford, I never, on principle, have refused a part. It is my business to do whatever is deemed advantageous to the whole concern, to do as much good as I can; not to think of myself. If they bid me act Scrubb, I would act it!"

which disdained the appearance of presuming on her real power, rendered her docile, in some instances, to a degree which I regretted while I loved her for it. She had a perception of some of the traditional absurdities of dress, and ridiculous technical anomalies of theatrical arrangements, which she had not power to alter, and which I have seen her endure with wondrous good temper. Had she remained on the stage, her fine taste and original and powerful mind would have carried the public with her in some things which she contemplated: for instance, she had an idea of restoring King Lear, as originally written by Shakspeare, and playing the *real* Cordelia to her father's Lear. When left to her own judgment, she ever thought more of what was worthy and beautiful in itself, than she calculated on the amount of vulgar applause it might attract, or the sums it might bring to the treasury. Thus, for her first benefit she played Portia, a character which no

vain, self-confident actress would have selected for such an occasion, because, as the play is now performed, the part is comparatively short, is always considered of secondary importance, and affords but few effective points: this was represented to her; but she persisted in her choice: and how she played it out of her own heart and soul! how she revelled in the poetry of the part, with a conscious sense and enjoyment of its beauty, which was communicated to her audience! Self, after the first tremor, was forgotten, and vanity lost in her glowing perception of the charm of the character. She lamented over every beautiful line and passage which had been "*cut out*" by profane hands.* To those which remained, the rich

* At Dresden and at Frankfort I saw the Merchant of Venice played as it stands in Shakspeare, with all the stately scenes between Portia and her suitors—the whole of the character of Jessica—the lovely moon-light dialogue between Jessica and Lorenzo, and the beautiful speeches given to Portia, all which, by sufferance

and mellow tones of her voice gave added power, blending with the music of the verse. It was by her own earnest wish that she played Camiola, in Massinger's *Maid of Honour*, and this was certainly one of her most exquisite and most finished parts; but the quiet elegance, the perfect delicacy of the delineation were never appreciated. She was aware of this: she said, "The first rows of the pit, and the first few boxes will understand me; for the rest of that great theatre, I ought to play as they paint the scenes—in great splashes of

of an English audience, are omitted on our stage. When I confessed to some of the great German critics, that the *Merchant of Venice*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *King Lear*, &c. were performed in England, not only with important omissions of the text, but with absolute alterations, affecting equally the truth of character, and the construction of the story, they looked at me, at first, as if half incredulous, and their perception of the barbarism, as well as the absurdity, was so forcibly expressed on their countenances, and their contempt so justifiable, that I confess I felt ashamed for my countrymen.

black and white." Bianca, in Millman's Fazio, was another of her finest parts, and as it contained more stage effect, it told more with the public. In this character she certainly took even her greatest admirers by surprise. The expression of slumbering passion, and its gradual developement, were so fervently portrayed, and yet so nicely shaded ; the frenzy of jealousy, and the alienation of intellect, so admirably discriminated, and so powerfully given, that when the first emotions had subsided, not admiration only, but wonder seized upon her audience : nor shall I easily forget the pale composure with which she bore this—one of her most intoxicating triumphs.

In Constance, in Queen Katherine, in Lady Macbeth, the want of amplitude and maturity of person, of physical weight and power, and a deficiency both of experience and self-confidence, were against her ; but her conception of character was so *true*, and her personal resemblance to her aunt

so striking, in spite of her comparatively diminutive features and figure, that one of the best and severest of our dramatic critics said, "it was like looking at Mrs. Siddons through the wrong end of an opera-glass."* She had conceived the idea of

* The resemblance was in the brow and eye. When she was sitting to Sir Thomas Lawrence, he said, "These are the eyes of Mrs. Siddons." She said, "You mean *like* those of Mrs. Siddons." "No," he replied, "they are the *same* eyes, the construction is the same, and to draw them is the same thing."

I have ever been at a loss for a word which should express the peculiar property of an eye like that of Mrs. Siddons, which could not be called piercing or penetrating, or any thing that gives the idea of searching or acute; but it was an eye which, in its softest look, and, to a late period of her life, went straight into the depths of the soul as a ray of light finds the bottom of the ocean. Once, when I was conversing with the celebrated German critic, Böttiger, of Dresden, and he was describing the person of Madame Schirmer, after floundering in a sea of English epithets, none of which conveyed his meaning, he at last exclaimed with enthusiasm—"Madam! her eye was *perforating*!"

giving quite a new reading, which undoubtedly would have been the *true* reading, of the character of Katherine of Arragon, and instead of playing it with the splendid poetical colouring in which Mrs. Siddons had arrayed it, bring it down to the prosaic delineation which Shakspeare really gave, and history and Holbein have transmitted to us ; but the experiment was deemed too hazardous ; and it was so. The public at large would never have understood it. The character of the queen mother, in her own tragedy of Francis I., was another part of which the weight seemed to overwhelm her youthful powers, and after the first few nights she ceased to play it.

While on the English stage, she never became so far the finished artist as to be independent of her own emotions, her own individual sentiments. It was not only necessary that she should understand a character, it was necessary that she should *feel* it. She invariably excelled in those charac-

ters in which her sympathies were awakened. In Juliet, in Portia, in Camiola, in Julia,* (perhaps the most *popular* of all her parts,) and I believe I may add, in Bianca, she will not soon or easily be surpassed. For the same reason, if she could be said to have failed in any part, it was in that of Calista, which she abhorred, and never, I believe, could comprehend. Isabella† was another part which I think she never really felt ; she never could throw her powers into it. The bald style and the prosaic monotonous misery of the first acts, in which her aunt called forth such torrents of tears, wearied her ; though the tragic of the situations in the last act roused her, and was given most effectively. She had not, at the time she took leave of us, conquered the mechanical part of her profession—the last, but not the least necessary department of her art, which it had taken her aunt Siddons seven years, and Pasta almost as

* In the Hunchback.

† In the Fatal Marriage.

long, to achieve ; she was too much under the influence of her own nerves and moods of feeling ; the warm blushes, the hot tears, the sob, the tremor, were at times too real. After playing in Mrs. Beverly, Bianca, and Julia, the physical suffering and excitement were sometimes most painful ; and the performance of Constance actually deprived her of her hearing for several hours, and rendered her own voice inaudible to her ; this, it will be allowed, was paying somewhat dear for her laurels, even though she had valued them more than in truth she ever did.

Fanny Kemble, as one of a gifted race, " the latest born of all Olympus' faded hierarchy," had really a just pride in the professional distinction of her family. She was proud of being a Kemble, and not insensible to the idea of treading in the steps of her aunt. But she had seen the stage desecrated, and never for a moment indulged the thought that she was destined to regenerate it.

She felt truly her own position. Her ambition was not professional. She had always the consciousness of a power—of which she has already given evidence—to ensure to herself a higher, a more real immortality than that which the stage can bestow. She had a very high idea, abstractedly, of the capabilities of her art; but the native elegance of her mind, her poetical temperament, her profound sense of the *serious ideal*, rendered her extremely, and at times painfully sensitive, to the prosaic drawbacks which attended its exercise in public, and her strong understanding showed her its possible evils. She feared for the effect that incessant praise, incessant excitement, might at length produce on her temper. “I am in dismay,” said she, (I give her *own* words,) “when I think that all this may become necessary to me. Could I be sure of retaining my love for higher and better occupations, and my desire for a nobler, though more distant fame, I should not

have these apprehensions ; but I am cut off by constant labour from those pursuits which I love and honour, and neither they, nor any of our capabilities, can outlive long neglect and disuse." Thus she felt, and thus she expressed herself at the age of twenty, and even while enjoying her success with a true girlish buoyancy of spirit, the more delightful, the more interesting, inasmuch as it seemed to tremble at itself. I have actually heard her reproached for not being *sufficiently* elated and excited by the public homage ; but, the truth is, she was grateful for praise, rather than intoxicated by it—more pleased with her success than proud of it.* "I dare not," said she, "feel all I *could*

* I recollect being present when some one was repeating to her a very high-flown and enthusiastic eulogy, of which she was the subject. She listened very quietly, and then said with indescribable *naïveté*—"Perhaps I ought to blush to have all these things thus repeated to my face ; but the truth is, I *cannot*. I cannot, by any effort of my own imagination, see my-

feel : I must watch myself." And by a more exact attention to her religious duties, and by giving as much time as possible to the cultivation of many resources and accomplishments, she endeavoured to preserve the command over her own faculties, and the even balance of her mind. I am persuaded that this lofty tone of feeling, this mixture of self-subjection and self-respect, gave to her general deportment on the stage that indescribable charm, quite apart from any grace of person or action, which all who have seen her must have felt, and none can have forgotten.

And now, what shall I say more? If I dared to violate the sacredness of private intercourse, I could indeed say much—*much* more. That she came forward and devoted herself for her family

self as people speak of me. It gives no reflection back to my mind. I cannot fancy myself like this. All I can clearly understand is, that you and every body are very much pleased, and I am very glad of it!"

in times of trial and trouble—that twice she saved them from ruin—that she has achieved two fortunes, besides a brilliant fame, and by her talents won independence for herself and those she loved,—and that she has done all this before the age of five-and-twenty, is known to many ; but few are aware how much more admirable, more respectable, than any of her mental gifts and her well-earned distinction, were the moral strength with which she sustained the severest ordeal to which a youthful character could be exposed ; the simplicity with which she endured—half recoiling—the incessant adulation which beset her from morn to night ;* her

* It must be remembered that it was not *only* fashionable incense and public applause ; it was the open enthusiastic admiration of such men as Sir Walter Scott, Sir Thomas Lawrence, Moore, Rogers, Campbell, Barry Cornwall, and others of great name, who brought rich flattery in prose and in verse, and laid it at her feet. Just before she came on the stage she had spent about a year in Scotland with her excellent relative and friend,

self-command in success; her gentle dignity in reverse; her straightforward integrity, which knew no turning nor shadow of turning; her noble spirit, which disdained all petty rivalry; her earnest sense of religion, “to which alone she trusted to keep her right.”* Suddenly she became the idol of the public; suddenly she was transplanted into a sphere of society, where, as long as she could administer excitement to fashionable inanity, she was worshipped. She carried into those circles all the freshness of her vigorous and poetical mind—all the unworn feelings of her young heart. So much genuine simplicity, such perfect innocence and modesty, allied to such rare powers, and to an habitual familiarity with the language of poetry and the delineation of

Mrs. Henry Siddons, and always referred to this period as her “Sabbatical year, granted to her to prepare her mind and principles for *this great trial*.”

* Her own words.

passion, was not *there* understood, or rather, was *mis*-understood—and no wonder! To the *blasé* men, the vapid girls, and artificial women, who then surrounded her, her generous feelings, “when the bright soul broke forth on every side,” appeared mere acting; they were indeed constrained to believe it such; for if for a moment they had deemed it all real, it must have forced on them comparisons by no means favourable to themselves. If, under these circumstances, her quick sensibility to pleasurable emotion of all kinds, and her ready sympathy with all the *external* refinement, splendour, and luxury of aristocratic life, conspired for a moment to dazzle her imagination, she recovered herself immediately, and from first to last, her warm and strong affections, the moral texture of her character; the refinement, which was as native to her mind, “as fragrance to the rose,” remained unimpaired. These—a rich dower—she is about to carry into the shades of domestic life. Another

land will be her future home. By another name shall fame speak of her, who was endeared to us as FANNY KEMBLE: and *she*, who with no steady hand pens this slight tribute to the virtues she loved, bids to that name—farewell !

THE FALSE ONE.

THE FALSE ONE.*

And give you, mix'd with western sentimentalism,
Some samples of the finest orientalism.

LORD BYRON.

AKBAR, the most enlightened and renowned among the sovereigns of the East, reigned over all those vast territories, which extend from the Indus to the Ganges, and from the snowy mountains of the north to the kingdoms of Guzerat and Candeish on the south. After having subdued the factious omrahs, and the hereditary enemies of his family,

* First published in 1827. The anecdote on which this tale is founded, I met with in the first volume of Dow's Translation of Ferishta's History of Judea.

and made tributary to his power most of the neighbouring kingdoms, there occurred a short period of profound peace. Assisted by able ministers, Akbar employed this interval in alleviating the miseries, which half a century of war and ravage had called down upon this beautiful but ever wretched country. Commerce was relieved from the heavy imposts, which had hitherto clogged its progress; the revenues of the empire were improved and regulated; by a particular decree, the cultivators of the earth were exempted from serving in the imperial armies; and justice was every where impartially administered; tempered, however, with that extreme clemency, which in the early part of his reign, Akbar carried to an excess almost injurious to his interests. India, so long exposed to the desolating inroads of invaders, and torn by internal factions, began, at length, to “wear her plumed and jewelled turban with a smile of peace;” and all the various nations united

under his sway—the warlike Afghans, the proud Moguls, the gentle-spirited Hindoos, with one voice blessed the wise and humane government of the son of Baber, and unanimously bestowed upon him the titles of AKBAR, or the GREAT, and JUGGUT GROW, or GUARDIAN of MANKIND.

Meantime the happiness, which he had diffused among millions, seemed to have fled from the bosom of the sovereign. Cares far different from those of war, deeper than those of love, (for the love of eastern monarchs is seldom shadowed by anxiety,) possessed his thoughtful soul. He had been brought up in the strictest forms of the Mohammedan religion, and he meditated upon the text, which enjoins the extermination of all who rejected his prophet, till his conscience became like a troubled lake. He reflected that in his vast dominions there were at least fifteen different religions, which were subdivided into about three hundred and fifty sects: to extirpate thousands

and tens of thousands of his unoffending subjects, and pile up pyramids of human heads in honour of God and his prophet, as his predecessors had done before him, was, to his mild nature, not only abhorrent, but impossible. Yet as his power had never met with any obstacle, which force or address had not subdued before him, the idea of bringing this vast multitude to agree in one system of belief and worship appeared to him not utterly hopeless.

He consulted, after long reflection, his favourite and secretary, Abul Fazil, the celebrated historian, of whom it was proverbially said, that “the monarchs of the East feared more the pen of Abul Fazil than the sword of Akbar.” The acute mind of that great man saw instantly the wild impracticability of such a scheme; but willing to prove it to his master without absolutely contradicting his favourite scheme, he proposed, as a preparatory step, that the names of the various sects of reli-

gion known to exist in the sultan's dominions should be registered, and the tenets of their belief contained in their books of law, or promulgated by their priests, should be reviewed and compared; thence it would appear how far it was possible to reconcile them one with another.

This suggestion pleased the great king: and there went forth a decree from the imperial throne, commanding that all the religions and sects of religion to be found within the boundaries of the empire should send deputies, on a certain day, to the sultan, to deliver up their books of law, to declare openly the doctrines of their faith, and be registered by name in a volume kept for this purpose—whether they were followers of Jesus, of Moses, or of Mohammed; whether they worshipped God in the sun, in the fire, in the image, or in the stream; by written law or traditional practice: true believer or pagan infidel, none were excepted. The imperial mandate was

couched in such absolute, as well as alluring terms, that it became as impossible as impolitic to evade it ; it was therefore the interest of every particular sect, to represent in the most favourable light the mode of faith professed by each. Some thought to gain favour by the magnificence of their gifts ; others, by the splendour of their processions. Some rested their hopes on the wisdom and venerable appearance of the deputies they selected to represent them ; and others, (they were but few,) strong in their faith and spiritual pride, deemed all such aids unnecessary, and trusted in the truth of the doctrines they professed, which they only waited an opportunity to assert, secure that they needed only to be heard, to convert all who had ears to hear.

On the appointed day, an immense multitude had assembled from all the quarters of the empire, and pressed through the gates and streets of Agra, then the capital and residence of the monarch.

The principal durbar, or largest audience-court of the palace, was thrown open on this occasion. At the upper end was placed the throne of Akbar. It was a raised platform, from which sprung twelve twisted pillars of massy gold, all radiant with innumerable gems, supporting the golden canopy, over which waved the white umbrella, the insignia of power; the cushions upon which the emperor reclined, were of cloth of gold, incrustated with rubies and emeralds; six pages, of exquisite beauty, bearing fans of peacocks' feathers, were alone permitted to approach within the silver balustrade, which surrounded the seat of power. On one side stood the vizir Chan Azim, bold and erect of look, as became a warrior, and Abul Fazil, with his tablets in his hand, and his eyes modestly cast down: next to him stood Dominico Cuença, the Portuguese missionary, and two friars of his order, who had come from Goa by the express command of the sultan; on the other side,

the muftis and doctors of the law. Around were the great omrahs, the generals, governors, tributary princes, and ambassadors. The ground was spread with Persian carpets of a thousand tints, sprinkled with rose-water, and softer beneath the feet than the velvety durva grass; and clouds of incense, ambergris, and myrrh, filled the air. The gorgeous trappings of eastern splendour, the waving of standards, the glittering of warlike weapons, the sparkling of jewelled robes, formed a scene, almost sublime in its prodigal and lavish magnificence, such as only an oriental court could show.

Seven days did the royal Akbar receive and entertain the religious deputies: every day a hundred thousand strangers feasted at his expense; and every night the gifts he had received during the day, or the value of them, were distributed in alms to the vast multitude, without any regard to difference of belief. Seven days did the

royal Akbar sit on his musnud, and listen graciously to all who appeared before him. Many were the words spoken, and marvellous was the wisdom uttered; sublime were the doctrines professed, and pure the morality they enjoined: but the more the royal Akbar heard, the more was his great mind perplexed; the last who spoke seemed ever in the right, till the next who appeared turned all to doubt again. He was amazed, and said within himself, like the judge of old, “*What is truth?*”

It was observed, that the many dissenting or heterodox sects of the Mohammedan religion excited infinitely more indignation among the orthodox muftis, than the worst among the pagan idolaters. Their hearts burned within them through impatience and wrath, and they would almost have died on the spot for the privilege of confuting those blasphemers, who rejected Abu Becker; who maintained, with Abu Zail, that

blue was holier than green ; or with Mozar, that a sinner was worse than an infidel ; or believed with the Morgians, that in paradise God is beheld only with the eyes of our understanding ; or with the Kharejites, that a prince who abuses his power may be deposed without sin. But the sultan had forbidden all argument in his presence, and they were constrained to keep silence, though it was pain and grief to them.

The Seiks from Lahore, then a new sect, and since a powerful nation, with their light olive complexions, their rich robes and turbans all of blue, their noble features and free undaunted deportment, struck the whole assembly with respect, and were received with peculiar favour by the sultan. So also were the Ala-ilahiyahs, whose doctrines are a strange compound of the Christian, the Mohammedan, and the Pagan creeds ; but the Sactas, or Epicureans of India, met with a far different reception. This sect, which in secret professed

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the most profane and detestable opinions, endeavoured to obtain favour by the splendid offerings they laid at the foot of the throne, and the graceful and seducing eloquence of their principal speaker. It was, however, in vain, that he threw over the tenets of his religion, as publicly acknowledged, the flimsy disguise of rhetoric and poetry ; that he endeavoured to prove, that all happiness consisted in enjoying the world's goods, and all virtue in mere abstaining from evil ; that death is an eternal sleep ; and therefore to reject the pleasures of this life, in any shape, the extreme of folly ; while at every pause of his oration, voices of the sweetest melody chorussed the famous burden :

“ May the hand never shake which gather'd the grapes !
May the foot never slip which press'd them !”

Akbar commanded the Sactas from his presence, amid the murmurs and execrations of all parties :

and though they were protected for the present by the royal passport, they were subsequently banished beyond the frontiers of Cashmere.

The fire-worshippers, from Guzerat, presented the books of their famous teacher, Zoroaster ; to them succeeded the Jainas, the Buddhists, and many more, innumerable as the leaves upon the banyan tree—countless as the stars at midnight.

Last of all came the deputies of the Brahmans. On their approach there was a hushed silence, and then arose a suppressed murmur of amazement, curiosity, and admiration. It is well known with what impenetrable secrecy the Brahmans guard the peculiar mysteries of their religion. In the reigns of Akbar's predecessors, and during the first invasions of the Moguls, many had suffered martyrdom in the most horrid forms, rather than suffer their sanctuaries to be violated, or disclose the contents of their Vedas or sacred books. Loss of caste, excommunication in this world, and

eternal perdition in the next, were the punishments awarded to those, who should break this fundamental law of the Brahminical faith. The mystery was at length to be unveiled ; the doubts and conjectures, to which this pertinacious concealment gave rise, were now to be ended for ever. The learned doctors and muftis bent forward with an attentive and eager look—Abul Fazil raised his small, bright, piercing eyes, while a smile of dubious import passed over his countenance—the Portuguese monk threw back his cowl, and the calm and scornful expression of his fine features changed to one of awakened curiosity and interest : even Akbar raised himself from his jewelled couch as the deputies of the Brahmans approached. A single delegate had been chosen from the twelve principal temples and seats of learning, and they were attended by forty aged men, selected from the three inferior castes, to represent the mass of the Indian population—warriors, merchants, and

husbandmen. At the head of this majestic procession was the Brahman Sarma, the high priest, and principal *Gooroo* or teacher of theology at Benares. This singular and venerable man had passed several years of his life in the court of the sultan Baber; and the dignity and austerity, that became his age and high functions, were blended with a certain grace and ease in his deportment, which distinguished him above the rest.

When the sage Sarma had pronounced the usual benediction, "May the king be victorious!" Akbar inclined his head with reverence. "Wise and virtuous Brahmans!" he said, "our court derives honour from your illustrious presence. Next to the true faith taught by our holy Prophet, the doctrines of Brahma must exceed all others in wisdom and purity, even as the priests of Brahma excel in virtue and knowledge the wisest of the earth: disclose, therefore, your sacred Sastras, that we may inhale from them, as from the roses

of paradise, the precious fragrance of truth and of knowledge!"

The Brahman replied, in the soft and musical tones of his people, "O king of the world! we are not come before the throne of power to betray the faith of our fathers, but to die for it, if such be the will of the sultan!" Saying these words, he and his companions prostrated themselves upon the earth, and, taking off their turbans, flung them down before them: then, while the rest continued with their foreheads bowed to the ground, Sarma arose, and stood upright before the throne. No words can describe the amazement of Akbar. He shrunk back and struck his hands together; then he frowned, and twisted his small and beautifully curled mustachios:—"The sons of Brahma mock us!" said he at length; "is it thus our imperial decrees are obeyed?"

"The laws of our faith are immutable," replied the old man, calmly, "and the contents of the

Vedas were pre-ordained from the beginning of time to be revealed to the TWICE-BORN alone. It is sufficient, that therein are to be found the essence of all wisdom, the principles of all virtue, and the means of acquiring immortality."

"Doubtless, the sons of Brahma are pre-eminently wise," said Akbar, sarcastically; "but are the followers of the Prophet accounted as fools in their eyes? The sons of Brahma are excellently virtuous, but are all the rest of mankind vicious? Has the most high God confined the knowledge of his attributes to the Brahmans alone, and hidden his face from the rest of his creatures? Where, then, is his justice? where his all-embracing mercy?"

The Brahman, folding his arms, replied: "It is written, Heaven is a palace with many doors, and every man shall enter by his own way. It is not given to mortals to examine or arraign the de-

crees of the Deity, but to hear and to obey. Let the will of the sultan be accomplished in all things else. In this let the God of all the earth judge between the king and his servants."

"Now, by the head of our Prophet! shall we be braved on our throne by these insolent and contumacious priests? Tortures shall force the seal from those lips!"

"Not so!" said the old Brahman, drawing himself up with a look of inexpressible dignity. "It is in the power of the Great King to deal with his slaves as seemeth good to him; but fortitude is the courage of the weak; and the twice-born sons of Brahma can suffer more in the cause of truth, than even the wrath of Akbar can inflict."

At these words, which expressed at once submission and defiance, a general murmur arose in the assembly. The dense crowd became agitated as the waves of the Ganges just before the rising

of the hurricane. Some opened their eyes wide with amazement at such audacity, some frowned with indignation, some looked on with contempt, others with pity. All awaited in fearful expectation, till the fury of the sultan should burst forth and consume these presumptuous offenders. But Akbar remained silent, and for some time played with the hilt of his poniard, half unsheathing it, and then forcing it back with an angry gesture. At length he motioned to his secretary to approach ; and Abul Fazil, kneeling upon the silver steps of the throne, received the sultan's commands. After a conference of some length, inaudible to the attendants around, Abul Fazil came forward, and announced the will of the sultan, that the durbar should be presently broken up. The deputies were severally dismissed with rich presents ; all, except the Brahmans, who were commanded to remain in the quarter assigned to them during the royal pleasure; and a strong guard was placed over them.

Meantime Akbar withdrew to the private apartments of his palace, where he remained for three days inaccessible to all, except his secretary Abul Fazil, and the Christian monk. On the fourth day he sent for the high priest of Benares, and successively for the rest of the Brahmans, his companions; but it was in vain he tried threats and temptations, and all his arts of argument and persuasion. They remained calmly and passively immoveable. The sultan at length pardoned and dismissed them with many expressions of courtesy and admiration. The Brahman Sarma was distinguished among the rest by gifts of peculiar value and magnificence, and to him Akbar made a voluntary promise, that, during his reign, the cruel tax, called the Kerea, which had hitherto been levied upon the poor Indians whenever they met to celebrate any of their religious festivals, should be abolished.

But all these professions were hollow and insi-

dious. Akbar was not a character to be thus baffled; and assisted by the wily wit of Abul Fazil, and the bold intriguing monk, he had devised a secret and subtle expedient, which should at once gratify his curiosity, and avenge his insulted power.

Abul Fazil had an only brother, many years younger than himself, whom he had adopted as his son, and loved with extreme tenderness. He had intended him to tread, like himself, the intricate path of state policy; and with this view he had been carefully educated in all the learning of the East, and had made the most astonishing progress in every branch of science. Though scarcely past his boyhood, he had already been initiated into the intrigues of the court; above all, he had been brought up in sentiments of the most profound veneration and submission for the monarch he was destined to serve. In some respects Faizi resembled his brother: he possessed the same ver-

satilily of talents, the same acuteness of mind, the same predilection for literary and sedentary pursuits, the same insinuating melody of voice and fluent grace of speech ; but his ambition was of a nobler cast, and though his moral perceptions had been somewhat blunted by a too early acquaintance with court diplomacy, and an effeminate, though learned education, his mind and talents were decidedly of a higher order. He also excelled Abul Fazil in the graces of his person, having inherited from his mother (a Hindoo slave of surpassing loveliness) a figure of exquisite grace and symmetry, and features of most faultless and noble beauty.

Thus fitted by nature and prepared by art for the part he was to perform, this youth was secretly sent to Allahabad, where the deputies of the Brahmans rested for some days on their return to the Sacred City. Here Abul Fazil, with great appearance of mystery and circumspection, intro-

duced himself to the chief priest, Sarma, and presented to him his youthful brother as the orphan son of the Brahman Mitra, a celebrated teacher of astronomy in the court of the late sultan. Abul Fazil had artfully prepared such documents, as left no doubt of the truth of his story. His pupil in treachery played his part to admiration, and the deception was complete and successful.

“ It was the will of the Great King,” said the wily Abul Fazil, “ that this fair youth should be brought up in his palace, and converted to the Moslem faith ; but, bound by my vows to a dying friend, I have for fourteen years eluded the command of the sultan, and in placing him under thy protection, O most venerable Sarma ! I have at length discharged my conscience, and fulfilled the last wishes of the Brahman Mitra. Peace be with him ! If it seem good in thy sight, let this remain for ever a secret between me and thee. I have successfully thrown dust in the eyes of the sultan,

and caused it to be reported, that the youth is dead of a sudden and grievous disease. Should he discover, that he has been deceived by his slave ; should the truth reach his mighty ears, the head of Abul Fazil would assuredly pay the forfeit of his disobedience."

The old Brahman replied with many expressions of gratitude and inviolable discretion ; and, wholly unsuspecting of the cruel artifice, received the youth with joy. He carried him to Benares, where some months afterwards he publicly adopted him as his son, and gave him the name of Govinda, "the Beloved," one of the titles under which the Indian women adore their beautiful and favourite idol, the god Crishna.

Govinda, so we must now call him, was set to study the sacred language, and the theology of the Brahmans as it is revealed in their Vedas and Sastras. In both he made quick and extraordinary progress ; and his singular talents did not

more endear him to his preceptor, than his docility, and the pensive, and even melancholy sweetness of his temper and manner. His new duties were not unpleasing or unsuited to one of his indolent and contemplative temper. He possibly felt, at first, a holy horror at the pagan sacrifices, in which he was obliged to assist, and some reluctance to feeding consecrated cows, gathering flowers, cooking rice, and drawing water for offerings and libations: but by degrees he reconciled his conscience to these occupations, and became attached to his Gooroo, and interested in his philosophical studies. He would have been happy, in short, but for certain uneasy sensations of fear and self-reproach, which he vainly endeavoured to forget or to reason down.

Abul Fazil, who dreaded not his indiscretion or his treachery, but his natural sense of rectitude, which had yielded reluctantly, even to the command of Akbar, maintained a constant intercourse

with him by means of an intelligent mute, who, hovering in the vicinity of Benares, sometimes in the disguise of a fisherman, sometimes as a coolie, was a continual spy upon all his movements; and once in every month, when the moon was in her dark quarter, Govinda met him secretly, and exchanged communications with his brother.

The Brahman Sarma was rich; he was proud of his high caste, his spiritual office, and his learning; he was of the tribe of Narayna, which for a thousand years had filled the offices of priesthood, without descending to any meaner occupation, or mingling blood with any inferior caste. He maintained habitually a cold, austere, and dignified calmness of demeanour; and flattered himself, that he had attained that state of perfect indifference to all worldly things, which, according to the Brahminical philosophy, is the highest point of human virtue; but, though simple, grave, and austere in his personal habits,

he lived with a splendour becoming his reputation, his high rank, and vast possessions. He exercised an almost princely hospitality ; a hundred mendicants were fed morning and evening at his gates. He founded and supported colleges of learning for the poorer Brahmans, and had numerous pupils, who had come from all parts of India to study under his direction. These were lodged in separate buildings. Only Govinda, as the adopted son of Sarma, dwelt under the same roof with his Gooroo, a privilege which had unconsciously become most precious to his heart : it removed him from the constrained companionship of those he secretly despised, and it placed him in delicious and familiar intercourse with one, who had become too dearly and fatally beloved.

The Brahman had an only child, the daughter of his old age. She had been named, at her birth, Priyamvada ; (or *softly speaking* ;) but her companions called her Amrà, the name of a graceful tree

bearing blossoms of peculiar beauty and fragrance, with which the Camdeo (Indian Cupid) is said to tip his arrows. Amrà was but a child when Govinda first entered the dwelling of his preceptor ; but as time passed on, she expanded beneath his eye into beauty and maturity, like the lovely and odoriferous flower, the name of which she bore.

The Hindoo women of superior rank and unmixed caste are in general of diminutive size ; and accordingly the lovely and high-born Amrà was formed upon the least possible scale of female beauty : but her figure, though so exquisitely delicate, had all the flowing outline and rounded proportions of complete womanhood. Her features were perfectly regular, and of almost infantine minuteness, except her eyes : those soft oriental eyes, not sparkling, or often animated, but large, dark, and lustrous ; as if in their calm depth of expression slept unawakened passions,

like the bright deity Heri reposing upon the coiled serpent. Her eyebrows were finely arched, and most delicately pencilled ; her complexion, of a pale and transparent olive, was on the slightest emotion suffused with a tint, which resembled that of the crimson water-lily as seen through the tremulous wave ; her lips were like the buds of the Camàlata, and unclosed to display a row of teeth like seed-pearl of Manar. But one of her principal charms, because peculiar and unequalled, was the beauty and redundance of her hair, which in colour and texture resembled black floss silk, and, when released from confinement, flowed downwards over her whole person like a veil, and swept the ground.

Such was Amrà : nor let it be supposed, that so perfect a form was allied to a merely passive and childish mind. It is on record, that, until the invasion of Hindostan by the barbarous Moguls, the Indian women enjoyed comparative

freedom : it is only since the occupation of the country by the Europeans, that they have been kept in entire seclusion. A plurality of wives was discouraged by their laws ; and, among some of the tribes of Brahmans, it was even forbidden. At the period of our story, that is, in the reign of Akbar, the Indian women, and more particularly the Brahminees, enjoyed much liberty. They were well educated, and some of them, extraordinary as it may seem, distinguished themselves in war and government. The Indian queen Durgetti, whose history forms a conspicuous and interesting episode in the life of Akbar, defended her kingdom for ten years against one of his most valiant generals. Mounted upon an elephant of war, she led her armies in person ; fought several pitched battles ; and being at length defeated in a decisive engagement, she stabbed herself on the field, rather than submit to her barbarous conqueror. Nor was this a solitary instance of female

heroism and mental energy : and the effect of this freedom, and the respect with which they were treated, appeared in the morals and manners of the women.

The gentle daughter of Sarma was not indeed fitted by nature either to lead or to govern, and certainly had never dreamed of doing either. Her figure, gestures, and movements, had that softness at once alluring and retiring, that indolent grace, that languid repose, common to the women of tropical regions.

“ All her affections like the dews on roses,

Fair as the flowers themselves ; as soft, as gentle.”

Her spirit, in its “ mildness, sweetness, blessedness,” seemed as flexible and unresisting as the tender Vasanta creeper. She had indeed been educated in all the exclusive pride of her caste, and taught to regard all who were not of the privileged race of Brahma as *frangi* (or impure ;) but this principle, though so early instilled into

her mind as to have become a part of her nature, was rather passive than active ; it had never been called forth. She had never been brought into contact with those, whose very look she would have considered as pollution ; for she had no intercourse but with those of her own nation, and watchful and sustaining love were all around her. Her learned accomplishments extended no farther than to read and write the Hindostanee tongue. To tend and water her flowers, to feed her birds, which inhabited a gaily gilded aviary in her garden, to string pearls, to embroider muslin, were her employments ; to pay visits and receive them, to lie upon cushions, and be fanned asleep by her maids, or listen to the endless tales of her old nurse, Gautami, whose memory was a vast treasure of traditional wonders—these were her amusements. That there were graver occupations, and dearer pleasures, proper to her sex, she knew ; but thought not of them, till the young Govinda

came to disturb the peace of her innocent bosom. She had been told to regard him as a brother ; and, as she had never known a brother, she believed, that, in lavishing upon him all the glowing tenderness of her young heart, she was but obeying her father's commands. If her bosom fluttered when she heard his footsteps ; if she trembled upon the tones of his voice ; if, while he was occupied in the services of the temple, she sat in her veranda awaiting his return, and, the moment he appeared through the embowering acacias, a secret and unaccountable feeling made her breathe quick, and rise in haste and retire to her inner apartments, till he approached to pay the salutations due to the daughter of his preceptor ; what was it, what *could* it be, but the tender solicitude of a sister for a new-found brother ? But Govinda himself was not so entirely deceived. His boyhood had been passed in a luxurious court, and among the women and slaves of his brother's

harem ; and though so young, he was not wholly inexperienced in a passion, which is the too early growth of an eastern heart. He knew why he languished in the presence of his beautiful sister ; he could tell why the dark splendour of Amrà's eyes pierced his soul like the winged flames shot into a besieged city. He could guess, too, why those eyes kindled with a softer fire beneath his glance : but the love he felt was so chastened by the awe which her serene purity, and the dignity of her sweet and feminine bearing shed around her ; so hallowed by the nominal relationship in which they stood ; so different, in short, from any thing he had ever felt, or seen, or heard of, that, abandoned to all the sweet and dream-like enchantment of a boyish passion, Govinda was scarcely conscious of the wishes of his own heart, until accident in the same moment disclosed his secret aspirations to himself, and bade him for ever despair of their accomplishment.

On the last day of the dark half of the moon, it was the custom of the wise and venerable Sarma to bathe at sunset in the Ganges, and afterwards retire to private meditation upon the thousand names of God, by the repetition of which, as it is written, a man insures to himself everlasting felicity. But while Sarma was thus absorbed in holy abstraction, where were Govinda and Amrà ?

In a spot fairer than the poet's creative pencil ever wrought into a picture for fancy to dwell on—where, at the extremity of the Brahman's garden, the broad and beautiful stream that bounded it ran swiftly to mingle its waves with those of the thrice-holy Ganges ; where mangoes raised their huge twisted roots in a thousand fantastic forms, while from their boughs hung suspended the nests of the little Baya birds, which waved to and fro in the evening breeze—there had Amrà and Govinda met together, it might be, without design. The sun had set, the Cistus

flowers began to fall, and the rich blossoms of the night-loving Nilica diffused their rich odour. The Peyoo awoke to warble forth his song, and the fire-flies were just visible, as they flitted under the shade of the Champac trees. Upon a bank, covered with that soft and beautiful grass, which, whenever it is pressed or trodden on, yields a delicious perfume, were Amrà and Govinda seated side by side. Two of her attendants, at some little distance, were occupied in twining wreaths of flowers. Amrà had a basket at her feet, in which were two small vessels of porcelain. One contained cakes of rice, honey, and clarified butter, kneaded by her own hand ; in the other were mangoes, rose-apples, and musk-melons ; and garlands of the holy palàsa blossoms, sacred to the dead, were flung around the whole. This was the votive offering, which Amrà had prepared for the tomb of her mother, who was buried in the garden. And now, with her elbow resting on her knee, and

her soft cheek leaning on her hand, she sat gazing up at the sky, where the stars came flashing forth one by one; and she watched the auspicious moment for offering her pious oblation. But Govinda looked neither on the earth, nor on the sky. What to him were the stars, or the flowers, or the moon rising in dewy splendour? His eyes were fixed upon one, who was brighter to him than the stars, lovelier than the moon when she drives her antelopes through the heavens, sweeter than the night-flower which opens in her beam.

“O Amrà!” he said, at length, and while he spoke his voice trembled even at its own tenderness, “Amrà! beautiful and beloved sister! thine eyes are filled with the glory of that sparkling firmament! the breath of the evening, which agitates the silky filaments of the Seris, is as pleasant to thee as to me: but the beauty, which I see, thou canst not see; the power of deep joy, which thrills over my heart like the breeze

over those floating lotuses—oh ! *this* thou canst not feel!—Let me take away those pearls and gems scattered among thy radiant tresses, and replace them with these fragrant and golden clusters of Champac flowers ! If ever there were beauty, which could disdain the aid of ornament, is it not that of Amrà ? If ever there were purity, truth, and goodness, which could defy the powers of evil, are they not thine ? O, then, let others braid their hair with pearls, and bind round their arms the demon-scaring amulet, my sister needs no spells to guard her innocence, and cannot wear a gem that does not hide a charm !”

The blush, which the beginning of this passionate speech had called up to her cheek, was changed to a smile, as she looked down upon the mystic circle of gold, which bound her arm.

“ It is not a talisman,” said she, softly ; “ it is the Tali, the nuptial bracelet, which was bound upon my arm when I was married.”

“*Married!*” the word rent away from the heart of Govinda that veil, with which he had hitherto shrouded his secret hopes, fears, wishes, and affections. His mute agitation sent a trouble into her heart, she knew not why. She blushed quick-kindling blushes, and drooped her head.

“Married!” he said, after a breathless pause; “when? to whom? who is the possessor of a gem of such exceeding price, and yet forbears to claim it?”

She replied, “To Adhar, priest of Indore, and the friend of Sarma. I was married to him while yet an infant, after the manner of our tribe.” Then perceiving his increasing disturbance, she continued, hurriedly, and with downcast eyes:—“I have never seen him; he has long dwelt in the countries of the south, whither he was called on an important mission; but he will soon return to reside here in the sacred city of his fathers, and will leave it no more. Why then should Govinda

be sad?" She laid her hand timidly upon his arm, and looked up in his face.

Govinda would fain have taken that beautiful little hand, and covered it with kisses and with tears; but he was restrained by a feeling of respect, which he could not himself comprehend. He feared to alarm her; he contented himself with fixing his eyes on the hand which rested on his arm; and he said, in a soft melancholy voice, "When Adhar returns, Govinda will be forgotten."

"O never! never!" she exclaimed with sudden emotion, and lifting towards him eyes, that floated in tears. Govinda bent down his head, and pressed his lips upon her hand. She withdrew it hastily, and rose from the ground.

At that moment her nurse, Gautami, approached them. "My child," said she, in a tone of reproach, "dost thou yet linger here, and the auspicious moment almost past? If thou delayest

longer, evil demons will disturb and consume the pious oblation, and the dead will frown upon the abandoned altar. Hasten, my daughter; take up the basket of offerings, and walk before us."

Amrà, trembling, leaned upon her maids, and prepared to obey; but when she had made a few steps, she turned back, as if to salute her brother, and repeated in a low emphatic tone the word "*Never!*"—then turned away. Govinda stood looking after the group, till the last wave of their white veils disappeared; and listened till the tinkling of their silver anklets could no longer be distinguished. Then he started as from a dream: he tossed his arms above his head; he flung himself upon the earth in an agony of jealous fury; he gave way to all the pent-up passions, which had been for years accumulating in his heart. All at once he rose: he walked to and fro; he stopped. A hope had darted into his mind, even through the gloom of despair. "For what," thought he,

“ have I sold myself? For riches ! for honour ! for power ! Ah ! what are they in such a moment ? Dust of the earth, toys, empty breath ! For what is the word of the Great King pledged to me ? Has he not sworn to refuse me nothing ? All that is most precious between earth and heaven, from the mountain to the sea, lies at my choice ! One word, and she is mine ! and I hesitate ? Fool ! she *shall* be mine ! ”

He looked up towards heaven, and marked the places of the stars. “ It is the appointed hour,” he muttered, and cautiously his eye glanced around, and he listened ; but all was solitary and silent. He then stole along the path, which led through a thick grove of Cadam trees, intermingled with the tall points of the Cusa grass, that shielded him from all observation. He came at last to a little promontory, where the river we have mentioned threw itself into the Ganges. He had not been there above a minute,

when a low whistle, like the note of the Chacora, was heard. A small boat rowed to the shore, and Sahib stood before him. Quick of eye and apprehension, the mute perceived instantly that something unusual had occurred. He pointed to the skiff; but Govinda shook his head, and made signs for a light and the writing implements. They were quickly brought; and while Sahib held the lamp, so that its light was invisible to the opposite shore, Govinda wrote, in the peculiar cipher they had framed for that purpose, a few words to his brother, sufficiently intelligible in their import, though dictated by the impassioned and tumultuous feelings of the moment. When he had finished, he gave the letter to Sahib, who concealed it carefully in the folds of his turban, and then, holding up the fingers of both hands thrice over, to intimate, that in thirty days he would bring the answer, he sprung into the boat, and was soon lost under the mighty shadow of the

trees, which stretched their huge boughs over the stream.

Govinda slowly returned ; but he saw Amrà no more that night. They met the next day, and the next ; but Amrà was no longer the same : she was silent, pensive ; and when pressed or rebuked, she became tearful and even sullen. She was always seen with her faithful Gautami, upon whose arm she leaned droopingly, and hung her head like her own neglected flowers. Govinda was almost distracted : in vain he watched for a moment to speak to Amrà alone ; the vigilant Gautami seemed resolved, that they should never meet out of her sight. Sometimes he would raise his eyes to her as she passed, with such a look of tender and sorrowful reproach, that Amrà would turn away her face and weep : but still she spoke not : and never returned his respectful salutation farther than by inclining her head.

The old Brahman perceived this change in his

beloved daughter ; but not for some time : and it is probable, that, being absorbed in his spiritual office and sublime speculations, he would have had neither leisure nor penetration to discover the cause, if the suspicions of the careful Gautami had not awakened his attention. She ventured to suggest the propriety of hastening the return of his daughter's betrothed husband ; and the Brahman, having taken her advice in this particular, rested satisfied ; persuading himself, that the arrival of Adhar would be a certain and all-sufficient remedy for the dreaded evil, which in his simplicity he had never contemplated, and could scarcely be made to comprehend.

A month had thus passed away, and again that appointed day came round, on which Govinda was wont to meet his brother's emissary : even on ordinary occasions he could never anticipate it without a thrill of anxiety,—now every feeling was wrought up to agony ; yet it was necessary to control the

slightest sign of impatience, and wear the same external guise of calm, subdued self-possession, though every vein was burning with the fever of suspense.

It was the hour when Sarma, having risen from his mid-day sleep, was accustomed to listen to Govinda while he read some appointed text. Accordingly Govinda opened his book, and standing before his preceptor in an attitude of profound humility, he read thus:

“ Garuna asked of the Crow Bushanda, ‘ What is the most excellent of natural forms? the highest good? the chief pain? the dearest pleasure? the greatest wickedness? the severest punishment? ”

“ And the Crow Bushanda answered him: ‘ In the three worlds, empyreal, terrestrial, and infernal, no form excels the human form.

“ ‘ Supreme felicity, on earth, is found in the conversation of a virtuous friend.

“ ‘ The keenest pain is inflicted by extreme poverty.

“ ‘ The worst of sins is uncharitableness ; and to the uncharitable is awarded the severest punishment : for while the despisers of their spiritual guides shall live for a thousand centuries as frogs, and those who condemn the Brahmans as ravens, and those who scorn other men as blinking bats, the uncharitable alone shall be condemned to the profoundest hell, and their punishment shall last for ever.’ ” *

Govinda closed his book ; and the old Brahman was proceeding to make an elaborate comment on this venerable text, when, looking up in the face of his pupil, he perceived that he was pale, abstracted, and apparently unconscious that he was speaking. He stopped : he was about to rebuke him, but he restrained himself ; and after reflecting for a few moments, he commanded the youth to prepare for the evening sacrifice : but first he de-

* *Vide* the Heetopadessa.

sired him to summon Amrà to her father's presence.

At this unusual command Govinda almost started. He deposited the sacred leaves in his bosom, and, with a beating heart and trembling steps, prepared to obey. When he reached the door of the zenana, he gently lifted the silken curtain which divided the apartments, and stood for a few moments contemplating, with silent and sad delight, the group that met his view.

Amrà was reclining upon cushions, and looking wan as a star that fades away before the dawn. Her head drooped upon her bosom, her hair hung neglected upon her shoulders: yet was she lovely still; and Govinda, while he gazed, remembered the words of the poet Calidas: "The water-lily, though dark moss may settle on its head, is nevertheless beautiful; and the moon, with dewy beams, is rendered yet brighter by its dark spots." She was clasping round her delicate wrist a bracelet of

gems ; and when she observed, that ever as she placed it on her attenuated arm it fell again upon her hand, she shook her head and smiled mournfully. Two of her maids sat at her feet, occupied in their embroidery ; and old Gautami, at her side, was relating, in a slow, monotonous recitative, one of her thousand tales of wonder, to divert the melancholy of her young mistress. She told how the demi-god Rama was forced to flee from the demons who had usurped his throne, and how his beautiful and faithful Seita wandered over the whole earth in search of her consort ; and, being at length overcome with grief and fatigue, she sat down in the pathless wilderness and wept ; and how there arose from the spot, where her tears sank warm into the earth, a fountain of boiling water of exquisite clearness and wondrous virtues ; and how maidens, who make a pilgrimage to this sacred well and dip their veils into its wave with pure devotion, ensure themselves the utmost feli-

city in marriage : thus the story ran. Amrà, who appeared at first abstracted and inattentive, began to be affected by the misfortunes and the love of the beautiful Seita ; and at the mention of the fountain and its virtues, she lifted her eyes with an expression of eager interest, and met those of Govinda fixed upon her. She uttered a faint cry, and threw herself into the arms of Gautami. He hastened to deliver the commands of his preceptor, and then Amrà, recovering her self-possession, threw her veil round her, arose, and followed him to her father's presence.

As they drew near together, the old man looked from one to the other. Perhaps his heart, though dead to all human passions, felt at that moment a touch of pity for the youthful, lovely, and loving pair who stood before him ; but his look was calm, cold, and serene, as usual.

“ Draw near, my son,” he said ; “ and thou, my beloved daughter, approach, and listen to the

will of your father. The time is come, when we must make ready all things for the arrival of the wise and honoured Adhar. My daughter, let those pious ceremonies, with which virtuous women prepare themselves ere they enter the dwelling of their husband, be duly performed: and do thou, Govinda, son of my choice, set my household in order, that all may be in readiness to receive with honour the bridegroom, who comes to claim his betrothed. To-morrow we will sacrifice to Ganesa, who is the guardian of travellers: this night must be given to penance and holy meditation. Amrà, retire: and thou, Govinda, take up that fagot of Tulsi-wood, with the rice and the flowers for the evening oblation, and follow me to the temple." So saying, the old man turned away hastily; and without looking back, pursued his path through the sacred grove.

Alas for those he had left behind! Govinda remained silent and motionless. Amrà would

have obeyed her father, but her limbs refused their office. She trembled—she was sinking: she timidly looked up to Govinda as if for support; his arms were extended to receive her: she fell upon his neck, and wept unrestrained tears. He held her to his bosom as though he would have folded her into his inmost heart, and hidden her there for ever. He murmured passionate words of transport and fondness in her ear. He drew aside her veil from her pale brow, and ventured to print a kiss upon her closed eyelids. “To-night,” he whispered, “in the grove of mangoes by the river’s bank!” She answered only by a mute caress; and then supporting her steps to her own apartments, he resigned her to the arms of her attendants, and hastened after his preceptor. He forgot, however, the materials for the evening sacrifice, and in consequence not only had to suffer a severe rebuke from the old priest, but the infliction of a penance extraordinary, which detained

him in the presence of his preceptor till the night was far advanced. At length, however, Sarma retired to holy meditation and mental abstraction, and Govinda was dismissed.

He had hitherto maintained, with habitual and determined self-command, that calm, subdued exterior, which becomes a pupil in the presence of his religious teacher ; but no sooner had he crossed the threshold, and found himself alone breathing the free night-air of heaven, than the smothered passions burst forth. He paused for one instant, to anathematise in his soul the Sastras and their contents, the gods and their temples, the priests and the sacrifices ; the futile ceremonies and profitless suffering to which his life was abandoned, and the cruel policy to which he had been made an unwilling victim. Then he thought of Amrà, and all things connected with her changed their aspect.

In another moment he was beneath the shadow of the mangoes on the river's brink. He looked

round, Amrà was not there: he listened, there was no sound. The grass bore marks of having been recently pressed, and still its perfume floated on the air. A few flowers were scattered round, fresh gathered, and glittering with dew. Govinda wrung his hands in despair, and flung himself upon the bank, where a month before they had sat together. On the very spot where Amrà had reclined, he perceived a lotos-leaf and a palasa flower laid together. Upon the lotos-leaf he could perceive written, with a thorn or some sharp point, the word AMRA; and the crimson palasa-buds were sacred to the dead. It was sufficient: he thrust the leaf and the flowers into his bosom; and, “swift as the sparkle of a glancing star,” he flew along the path which led to the garden sepulchre.

The mother of Amrà had died in giving birth to her only child. She was young, beautiful, and virtuous; and had lived happily with her husband notwithstanding the disparity of age. The pride

and stoicism of his caste would not allow him to betray any violence of grief, or show his affection for the dead, otherwise than by raising to her memory a beautiful tomb. It consisted of four light pillars, richly and grotesquely carved, supporting a pointed cupola, beneath which was an altar for oblations: the whole was overlaid with brilliant white stucco, and glittered through the gloom. A flight of steps led up to this edifice: upon the highest step, and at the foot of the altar, Amrà was seated alone and weeping.

Love—O love! what have I to do with thee? How sinks the heart, how trembles the hand as it approaches the forbidden theme! Of all the gifts the gods have sent upon the earth thou most precious—yet ever most fatal! As serpents dwell among the odorous boughs of the sandal-tree, and alligators in the thrice sacred waters of the Ganges, so all that is sweetest, holiest, dearest upon earth, is mixed up with sin, and pain, and misery, and

evil ! Thus hath it been ordained from the beginning ; and the love that hath never mourned, is not love.

How sweet, yet how terrible, were the moments that succeeded ! While Govinda, with fervid eloquence, poured out his whole soul at her feet, Amrà alternately melted with tenderness, or shrunk with sensitive alarm. When he darkly intimated the irresistible power he possessed to overcome all obstacles to their union—when he spoke with certainty of the time when she should be his, spite of the world and men—when he described the glorious height to which his love would elevate her—the delights and the treasures he would lavish around her, she, indeed, understood not his words ; yet, with all a woman's trusting faith in him she loves, she hung upon his accents—listened and believed. The high and passionate energy, with which his spirit, so long pent up and crushed within him, now revealed itself ; the consciousness of his own

power, the knowledge that he was beloved, lent such a new and strange expression to his whole aspect, and touched his fine form and features with such a proud and sparkling beauty, that Amrà looked up at him with a mixture of astonishment, admiration, and deep love, not wholly unmingled with fear ; almost believing, that she gazed upon some more than mortal lover, upon one of those bright genii, who inhabit the lower heaven, and have been known in the old time to leave their celestial haunts for love of the earth-born daughters of beauty.

Amrà did not speak, but Govinda felt his power. He saw his advantage, and, with the instinctive subtlety of his sex, he pursued it. He sighed, he wept, he implored, he upbraided. Amrà, overpowered by his emotion and her own, had turned away her head, and embraced one of the pillars of her mother's tomb, as if for protection. In accents of the most plaintive tenderness

she entreated him to leave her—to spare her—and even while she spoke her arm relaxed its hold, and she was yielding to the gentle force with which he endeavoured to draw her away ; when at this moment, so dangerous to both, a startling sound was heard—a rustling among the bushes, and then a soft, low whistle. Govinda started up at that well-known signal, and saw the head of the mute appearing just above the altar. His turban being green, was undistinguishable against the leafy back-ground ; and his small black eyes glanced and glittered like those of a snake. Govinda would willingly have annihilated him at that moment. He made a gesture of angry impatience, and motioned him to retire ; but Sahib stood still, shook his hand with a threatening expression, and made signs, that he must instantly follow him.

Amrà, meantime, who had neither seen nor heard any thing, began to suspect, that Govinda was communing with some invisible spirit ; she

clung to him in terror, and endeavoured to recall his attention to herself by the most tender and soothing words and caresses. After some time he succeeded in calming her fears ; and with a thousand promises of quick return, he at length tore himself away, and followed through the thicket the form of Sahib, who glided like a shadow before him.

When they reached the accustomed spot, the mute leapt into the canoe, which he had made fast to the root of a mango-tree, and motioning Govinda to follow him, he pushed from the shore, and rowed rapidly till they reached a tall, bare rock near the centre of the stream, beneath the dark shadow of which Sahib moored his little boat, out of the possible reach of human eye or ear.

All had passed so quickly, that Govinda felt like one in a dream ; but now, awakening to a sense of his situation, he held out his hand for the expected letter from his brother, trembling to learn

its import, upon which he felt that more than his life depended. Sahib, meanwhile, did not appear in haste to obey. At length, after a pause of breathless suspense, Govinda heard a low and well-remembered voice repeat an almost-forgotten name: "Faizi!" it said.

"O Prophet of God! my brother!" and he was clasped in the arms of Abul Fazil.

After the first transports of recognition had subsided, Faizi (it is time to use his real name) sank from his brother's arms to his feet: he clasped his knees. "My brother!" he exclaimed, "what is now to be my fate? You have not lightly assumed this disguise, and braved the danger of discovery! You know all, and have come to save me—to bless me? Is it not so?"

Abul Fazil could not see his brother's uplifted countenance, flushed with the hectic of feverish impatience, or his imploring eyes, that floated in tears; but his tones were sufficiently expressive.

“ Poor boy !” he said, compassionately, “ I should have foreseen this. But calm these transports, my brother ! nothing is denied to the sultan’s power, and nothing will he deny thee.”

“ He knows all, then ?”

“ All—and by his command am I come. I had feared, that my brother had sold his vowed obedience for the smile of a dark-eyed girl—what shall I say ?—I feared for his safety !”

“ O my brother ! there is no cause !”

“ I know it—enough !—I have seen and heard !”

Faizi covered his face with his hands.

“ If the sultan——”

“ Have no doubts,” said Abul Fazil : “ nothing is denied to the sultan’s power, nothing will be denied to thee.”

“ And the Brahman Adhar ?”

“ It has been looked to—he will not trouble thee.”

“ *Dead ?* O merciful Allah ! crime upon crime ! ”

“ His life is cared for,” said Abul Fazil. calmly : “ ask no more.”

“ It is sufficient. O my brother ! O Amrà ! ”—

“ She is thine !—Now hear the will of Akbar.” Faizi bowed his head with submission. “ Speak ! ” he said ; “ the slave of Akbar listens.”

“ In three months from this time,” continued Abul Fazil, “ and on this appointed night, it will be dark, and the pagodas deserted. Then, and not till then, will Sahib be found at the accustomed spot. He will bring in the skiff a dress, which is the sultan’s gift, and will be a sufficient disguise. On the left bank of the stream there shall be stationed an ample guard, with a close litter and a swift Arabian. Thou shalt mount the one, and in the other shall be placed this fair girl. Then fly : having first flung her veil upon the river to beguile pursuit ; the rest I leave to thine own

quick wit. But let all be done with secrecy and subtlety ; for the sultan, though he can refuse thee nothing, would not willingly commit an open wrong against a people he has lately conciliated ; and the violation of a Brahminee woman were enough to raise a province.”

“ It shall not need,” exclaimed the youth, clasping his hands : “ she loves me ! She shall live for me—only for me—while others weep her dead !”

“ It is well : now return we in silence, the night wears fast away.” He took one of the oars, Faizi seized the other, and with some difficulty they rowed up the stream, keeping close under the overshadowing banks. Having reached the little promontory, they parted with a strict and mute embrace.

Faizi looked for a moment after his brother, then sprung forward to the spot where he had left Amrà ; but she was no longer there : apparently

she had been recalled by her nurse to her own apartments, and did not again make her appearance.

Three months more completed the five years which had been allotted for Govinda's Brahminical studies; they passed but too rapidly away. During this time the Brahman Adhar did not arrive, nor was his name again uttered: and Amrà, restored to health, was more than ever tender and beautiful, and more than ever beloved.

The old Brahman, who had hitherto maintained towards his pupil and adopted son a cold and distant demeanour, now relaxed from his accustomed austerity, and when he addressed him it was in a tone of mildness, and even tenderness. Alas for Govinda! every proof of this newly-awakened affection pierced his heart with unavailing remorse. He had lived long enough among the Brahmans, to anticipate with terror the effects of his treachery, when once discovered; but he repelled such ob-

trusive images, and resolutely shut his eyes against a future, which he could neither control nor avert. He tried to persuade himself, that it was now too late; that the stoical indifference to all earthly evil, passion, and suffering, which the Pundit Sarma taught and practised, would sufficiently arm him against the double blow preparing for him. Yet, as the hour approached, the fever of suspense consumed his heart. Contrary passions distracted and bewildered him: his ideas of right and wrong became fearfully perplexed. He would have given the treasures of Istakar to arrest the swift progress of time. He felt like one entangled in the wheels of some vast machine, and giddily and irresistibly whirled along he knew not how nor whither.

At length the day arrived: the morning broke forth in all that splendour with which she descends upon "the Indian steep." Govinda prepared for the early sacrifice, the last he was to

perform. In spite of the heaviness and confusion which reigned in his own mind, he could perceive that something unusual occupied the thoughts of his preceptor : some emotion of a pleasurable kind had smoothed the old man's brow. His voice was softened ; and though his lips were compressed, almost a smile lighted up his eyes, when he turned them on Govinda. The sacrifice was one of unusual pomp and solemnity, in honour of the goddess Parvati, and lasted till the sun's decline. When they returned to the dwelling of Sarma he dismissed his pupils from their learned exercises, desiring them to make that day a day of rest and recreation, as if it were the festival of Sri, the goddess of learning, when books, pens, and paper, being honoured as her emblems, remain untouched, and her votaries enjoy a sabbath. When they were departed, the old Brahman commanded Govinda to seat himself on the ground opposite to him. This being the first time he had ever sat

in the presence of his preceptor, the young man hesitated; but Sarma motioned him to obey, and accordingly he sat down at a respectful distance, keeping his eyes reverently cast upon the ground. The old man then spoke these words:

“It is now five years since the son of Mitra entered my dwelling. He was then but a child, helpless, orphaned, ignorant of all true knowledge; expelled from the faith of his fathers and the privileges of his high caste. I took him to my heart with joy, I fed him, I clothed him, I opened his mind to truth, I poured into his soul the light of knowledge: he became to me a son. If in any thing I have omitted the duty of a father towards him, if ever I refused to him the wish of his heart or the desire of his eyes, let him now speak!”

“O my father!”—

“No more,” said the Brahman, gently, “I am answered in that one word; but all that I have

yet done seems as nothing in mine eyes: for the love I bear my son is wide as the wide earth, and my bounty shall be as the boundless firmament. Know that I have read thy soul! Start not! I have received letters from the south country. Amrà is no longer the wife of Adhar; for Adhar has vowed himself to a life of penance and celibacy in the temple of Indore, by order of an offended prince;—may he find peace! The writings of divorce are drawn up, and my daughter being already past the age when a prudent father hastens to marry his child, in order that the souls of the dead may be duly honoured by their posterity, I have sought for her a husband, such as a parent might desire; learned in the sciences, graced with every virtue; of unblemished life, of unmixed caste, and rich in the goods of this world.”

The Brahman stopped short. Faizi, breathing with difficulty, felt his blood pause at his heart.

“My son!” continued the old man, “I have

not coveted possessions or riches, but the gods have blessed me with prosperity ; be they praised for their gifts ! Look around upon this fair dwelling, upon those fertile lands, which spread far and wide, a goodly prospect ; and the herds that feed on them, and the bondsmen who cultivate them ; with silver and gold, and garments, and rich stores heaped up, more than I can count—all these do I give thee freely : possess them ! and with them I give thee a greater gift, and one that I well believe is richer and dearer in thine eyes—my daughter, my last and best treasure ! Thus do I resign all worldly cares, devoting myself henceforth solely to pious duties and religious meditation : for the few days he has to live, let the old man repose upon thy love ! A little water, a little rice, a roof to shelter him, these thou shalt bestow—he asks no more.”

The Brahman's voice faltered. He rose, and Govinda stood up, trembling in every nerve.

The old priest then laid his hand solemnly upon his bowed head and blessed him. "My son! to me far better than many sons, be thou blest as thou hast blessed me! The just gods requite thee with full measure all thou hast done! May the wife I bestow on thee bring to thy bosom all the felicity thou broughtest to me and mine, and thy last hours be calm and bright, as those thy love has prepared for me!"

"Ah, curse me not!" exclaimed Govinda, with a cry of horror; for in the anguish of that moment he felt as if the bitter malediction, thus unconsciously pronounced, was already fulfilling. He flung himself upon the earth in an agony of self-humiliation; he crawled to the feet of his preceptor, he kissed them, he clasped his knees. In broken words he revealed himself, and confessed the treacherous artifice of which he was at once the instrument and the victim. The Brahman stood motionless, scarcely comprehending the

words spoken. At length he seemed to awaken to the sense of what he heard, and trembled from head to foot with an exceeding horror; but he uttered no word of reproach: and after a pause, he suddenly drew the sacrificial poniard from his girdle, and would have plunged it into his own bosom, if Faizi had not arrested his arm, and without difficulty snatched the weapon from his shaking and powerless grasp.

“If yet there be mercy for me,” he exclaimed, “add not to my crimes this worst of all—make me not a sacrilegious murderer! Here,” he added, kneeling, and opening his bosom, “strike! satisfy at once a just vengeance, and end all fears in the blood of an abhorred betrayer! Strike, ere it be too late!”

The old man twice raised his hand, but it was without strength. He dropped the knife, and folding his arms, and sinking his head upon his bosom, he remained silent.

“O yet!” exclaimed Faizi, lifting with reverence the hem of his robe and pressing it to his lips, “if there remain a hope for me, tell me by what penance—terrible, prolonged, and unheard-of—I may expiate this sin; and hear me swear, that, henceforth, neither temptation, nor torture, nor death itself, shall force me to reveal the secrets of the Brahmin faith, nor divulge the holy characters in which they are written: and if I break this vow, may I perish from off the earth like a dog!”

The Brahman clasped his hands, and turned his eyes for a moment on the imploring countenance of the youth, but averted them instantly with a shudder.

“What have I to do with thee,” he said, at length, “thou serpent! Well is it written—‘Though the upas-tree were watered with nectar from heaven instead of dew, yet would it bear poison.’ Yet swear—”

“ I do—I will—”

“ Never to behold my face again, nor utter with those guileful and polluted lips the name of my daughter.”

“ My father !”

“ Father !” repeated the old man, with a flash of indignation, but it was instantly subdued. “ Swear !” he repeated, “ if vows can bind a thing so vile !”

“ My father, I embrace thy knees ! Not heaven itself can annul the past, and Amrà is mine beyond the power of fate or vengeance to disunite us—but by death !”

“ Hah !” said the Brahman, stepping back, “ it is then as I feared ! and this is well too !”—he muttered ; “ Heaven required a victim !”

He moved slowly to the door, and called his daughter with a loud voice : Amrà heard and trembled in the recesses of her apartments. The voice was her father’s, but the tones of that voice

made her soul sicken with fear; and, drawing her drapery round to conceal that alteration in her lovely form which was but too apparent, she came forth with faltering steps.

“ Approach !” said the Brahman, fixing his eyes upon her, while those of Faizi, after the first eager glance, remained rivetted to the earth. She drew near with affright, and gazed wildly from one to the other.

“ Ay ! look well upon him ! whom dost thou behold ?”

“ My father !—Ah ! spare me !”

“ Is he your husband ?”

“ Govinda ! alas !—speak for us !”—

“ Fool !”—he grasped her supplicating hands, —
“ say but the word—are you a wife ?”

“ I am ! I am ! *his*, before the face of Heaven !”

“ No !”—he dropped her hands, and spoke in a rapid and broken voice : “ No ! Heaven disclaims the monstrous mixture ! hell itself rejects it ! Had

he been the meanest among the sons of Brahma, I had borne it : but an Infidel, a base-born Moslem, has contaminated the stream of my life ! Accursed was the hour when he came beneath my roof, like a treacherous fox and a ravening wolf, to betray and to destroy ! Accursed was the hour, which mingled the blood of Narayna with that of the son of a slave-girl ! Shall I live to look upon a race of outcasts, abhorred on earth and excommunicate from heaven, and say, ‘ These are the offspring of Sarma ?’ Miserable girl ! thou wert preordained a sacrifice ! Die ! and thine infamy perish with thee !” Even while he spoke he snatched up the poniard which lay at his feet, but this he needed not—the blow was already struck home, and to her very heart. Before the vengeful steel could reach her, she fell, without a cry—a groan—senseless, and, as it seemed, lifeless, upon the earth.

Faizi, almost with a shriek, sprang forward ;

but the old man interposed : and, with the strong grasp of supernatural strength—the strength of despair—held him back. Meantime the women, alarmed by his cries, rushed wildly in, and bore away in their arms the insensible form of Amrà. Faizi strove to follow ; but, at a sign from the Brahman, the door was quickly closed and fastened within, so that it resisted all his efforts to force it. He turned almost fiercely—“ She will yet live !” he passionately exclaimed ; and the Brahman replied, calmly and disdainfully, “ If she be the daughter of Sarma, she will die !” Then rending his garments, and tearing off his turban, he sat down upon the sacrificial hearth ; and taking up dust and ashes, scattered them on his bare head and flowing beard : he then remained motionless, with his chin upon his bosom, and his arms crossed upon his knees. In vain did Faizi kneel before him, and weep, and supplicate for one word, one look : he was apparently lost to all consciousness,

rigid, torpid ; and, but that he breathed, and that there was at times a convulsive movement in his eyelids, it might have been thought, that life itself was suspended, or had altogether ceased.

Thus did this long and most miserable day wear away, and night came on. Faizi—who had spent the hours in walking to and fro like a troubled demon, now listening at the door of the zenana, from which no sound proceeded, now endeavouring in vain to win, by the most earnest entreaties, some sign of life or recognition from the old man—could no longer endure the horror of his own sensations. He stepped into the open air, and leaned his head against the porch. The breeze, which blew freshly against his parched lips and throbbing temples, revived his faculties. After a few moments he thought he could distinguish voices, and the trampling of men and horses, borne on the night air. He raised his hands in ecstasy. Again he bent his ear to listen : he heard the splash of

an oar. “They come!” he exclaimed, almost aloud, “one more plunge, and it is done! This hapless and distracted old man I will save from his own and other’s fury, and still be to him a son, in his own despite. And, Amrà! my own! my beautiful! my beloved! oh, how richly shall the future atone for these hours of anguish! In these arms the cruel pride and prejudices of thy race shall be forgotten. At thy feet I will pour the treasures of the world, and lift thee to joys beyond the brightest visions of youthful fancy! But—O merciful Allah!”—

At the same moment a long, loud, and piercing shriek was heard from the women’s apartments, followed by lamentable wailings. He made but one bound to the door. It resisted, but his despair was strong. He rushed against it with a force, that burst it from its hinges, and precipitated him into the midst of the chamber. It was empty and dark; so was the next, and the next. At last he

reached the inner and most sacred apartment. He beheld the lifeless form of Amrà extended on the ground. Over her face was thrown an embroidered veil: her head rested on the lap of her nurse, whose features appeared rigid with horror. The rest of the women, who were weeping and wailing, covered their heads, and fled at his approach. Faizi called upon the name of her he loved: he snatched the veil from that once lovely face—that face which had never been revealed to him but in tender and soul-beaming beauty. He looked, and fell senseless on the floor.

The unhappy Amrà, in recovering from her long swoon, had fallen into a stupor, which her attendants mistook for slumber, and left her for a short interval. She awoke, wretched girl! alone, she awoke to the sudden and maddening sense of her lost state, to all the pangs of outraged love, violated faith, shame, anguish, and despair. In a paroxysm of delirium, when none were near to

soothe or to save, she had made her own luxuriant and beautiful tresses the instrument of her destruction, and choked herself by swallowing her hair.

When the emissaries of the sultan entered this house of desolation, they found Faizi still insensible at the side of her he had so loved. He was borne away before recollection returned, placed in the litter which had been prepared for Amrà, and carried to Ferrukabad, where the sultan was then hunting with his whole court. What became of the old Brahman is not known. He passed away like a shadow from the earth, “and his place knew him not.” Whether he sought a voluntary death, or wore away his remaining years in secret penance, can only be conjectured, for all search was vain.

Eastern records tell, that Faizi kept his promise sacred, and never revealed the mysteries intrusted to him. Yet he retained the favour of Akbar, by whose command he translated from the Sanscrit tongue several poetical and historical works into

the choicest Persian. He became himself an illustrious poet ; and, like other poets of greater fame, created “ an immortality of his tears.” He acquired the title of *Sheich*, or “ the learned,” and rose to the highest civil offices of the empire. All outward renown, prosperity, and fame, were his ; but there was, at least, retributive justice in his early and tragical death.

Towards the conclusion of Akbar’s reign, Abul Fazil was sent upon a secret mission into the Deccan, and Faizi accompanied him. The favour which these celebrated brothers enjoyed at court, their influence over the mind of the sultan, and their entire union, had long excited the jealousy of Prince Selim,* the eldest son of Akbar, and he had vowed their destruction. On their return from the south, with a small escort, they were attacked by a numerous band of assassins, disguised as robbers, and both perished. Faizi was found

* Afterwards the Emperor Jehangire.

lying upon the body of Abul Fazil, whom he had bravely defended to the last. The death of these illustrious brothers was lamented, not only within the bounds of the empire, but through all the kingdoms of the East, whither their fame had extended ; and by the sultan's command they were interred together, and with extraordinary pomp. One incident only remains to be added. When the bodies were stripped for burial, there was found within the inner vest of the Sheich Faizi, and close to his heart, a withered Lotus leaf inscribed with certain characters. So great was the fame of the dead for wisdom, learning, and devotion, that it was supposed to be a talisman endued with extraordinary virtues, and immediately transmitted to the sultan. Akbar considered the relic with surprise. It was nothing but a simple Lotus leaf, faded, shrivelled, and stained with blood ; but on examining it more closely, he could trace, in ill-

formed and scarcely legible Indian letters, the word AMRA.

And when Akbar looked upon this tender memorial of a hapless love, and undying sorrow, his great heart melted within him, and he wept.

HALLORAN THE PEDLAR.

HALLORAN THE PEDLAR.*

“It grieves me,” said an eminent poet once to me, “it grieves and humbles me to reflect how much our moral nature is in the power of circumstances. Our best faculties would remain unknown even to ourselves did not the influences of external excitement call them forth like animalculæ, which lie torpid till awakened into life by the transient sunbeam.”

* This little tale was written in March, 1826, and in the hands of the publishers long before the appearance of Bainim’s novel of “The Nowlans,” which contains a similar incident, probably founded on the same fact.

This is generally true. How many walk through the beaten paths of every-day life, who but for the novelist's page would never weep or wonder ; and who would know nothing of the passions but as they are represented in some tragedy or stage piece ? not that they are incapable of high resolve and energy ; but because the finer qualities have never been called forth by imperious circumstances ; for while the wheels of existence roll smoothly along, the soul will continue to slumber in her vehicle like a lazy traveller. But for the French revolution, how many hundreds—*thousands*—whose courage, fortitude, and devotedness have sanctified their names, would have frittered away a frivolous, useless, or vicious life in the saloons of Paris ! We have heard of death in its most revolting forms braved by delicate females, who would have screamed at the sight of the most insignificant reptile or insect ; and men cheerfully toiling at mechanic trades for bread, who had

loured away the best years of their lives at the toilettes of their mistresses. We know not of what we are capable till the trial comes;—till it comes, perhaps, in a form which makes the strong man quail, and turns the gentler woman into a heroine.

The power of outward circumstances suddenly to awaken dormant faculties—the extraordinary influence which the mere instinct of self-preservation can exert over the mind, and the triumph of *mind* thus excited over physical weakness, were never more truly exemplified than in the story of HALLORAN THE PEDLAR.

The real circumstances of this singular case, differing essentially from the garbled and incorrect account which appeared in the newspapers some years ago, came to my knowledge in the following simple manner. My cousin George C * * *, an Irish barrister of some standing, lately succeeded to his family estates by the

death of a near relative ; and no sooner did he find himself in possession of independence than, abjuring the bar, where, after twenty years of hard struggling, he was just beginning to make a figure, he set off on a tour through Italy and Greece, to forget the wrangling of courts, the contumely of attornies, and the impatience of clients. He left in my hands a mass of papers, to burn or not, as I might feel inclined : and truly the contents of his desk were no bad illustration of the character and pursuits of its owner. Here I found abstracts of cases, and on their backs copies of verses, sketches of scenery, and numerous caricatures of judges, jurymen, witnesses, and his brethren of the bar—a bundle of old briefs, and the beginnings of two tragedies ; with a long list of Lord N——’s best jokes to serve his purposes as occasion might best offer. Among these heterogeneous and confused articles were a number of scraps carefully pinned together, containing notes

on a certain trial, the first in which he had been retained as counsel for the crown. The intense interest with which I perused these documents, suggested the plan of throwing the whole into a connected form, and here it is for the reader's benefit.

In a little village to the south of Clonmell lived a poor peasant named Michael, or as it was there pronounced Mickie Reilly. He was a labourer renting a cabin and a plot of potatoe-ground; and, on the strength of these possessions, a robust frame which feared no fatigue, and a sanguine mind which dreaded no reverse, Reilly paid his addresses to Cathleen Bray, a young girl of his own parish, and they were married. Reilly was able, skilful, and industrious; Cathleen was the best spinner in the county, and had constant sale for her work at Clonmell: they wanted nothing; and for the first year, as Cathleen said, "There wasn't upon the blessed earth two happier souls

than themselves, for Mick was the best boy in the world, and hadn't a fault to *spake* of--barring he took a drop now and then ; an' why wouldn't he ?" But as it happened, poor Reilly's love of "*the drop*" was the beginning of all their misfortunes. In an evil hour he went to the Fair of Clonmell to sell a dozen hanks of yarn of his wife's spinning, and a fat pig, the produce of which was to pay half a year's rent, and add to their little comforts. Here he met with a jovial companion, who took him into a booth, and treated him to sundry potations of whiskey ; and while in his company his pocket was picked of the money he had just received, and something more ; in short, of all he possessed in the world. At that luckless moment, while maddened by his loss and heated with liquor, he fell into the company of a recruiting serjeant. The many-coloured and gaily fluttering cockade in the soldier's cap shone like a rainbow of hope and promise before the drunken eyes of Mickle

Reilly, and ere morning he was enlisted into a regiment under orders for embarkation, and instantly sent off to Cork.

Distracted by the ruin he had brought upon himself, and his wife, (whom he loved a thousand times better than himself,) poor Reilly sent a friend to inform Cathleen of his mischance, and to assure her that on a certain day, in a week from that time, a letter would await her at the Clonmell post-office: the same friend was commissioned to deliver her his silver watch, and a guinea out of his bounty-money. Poor Cathleen turned from the gold with horror, as the price of her husband's blood, and vowed that nothing on earth should induce her to touch it. She was not a good calculator of time and distance, and therefore rather surprised that so long a time must elapse before his letter arrived. On the appointed day she was too impatient to wait the arrival of the carrier, but set off to Clonmell herself, a distance of ten

miles: there, at the post-office, she duly found the promised letter; but it was not till she had it in her possession that she remembered she could not read: she had therefore to hasten back to consult her friend Nancy, the schoolmaster's daughter, and the best scholar in the village. Reilly's letter, on being deciphered with some difficulty even by the learned Nancy, was found to contain much of sorrow, much of repentance, and yet more of affection: he assured her that he was far better off than he had expected or deserved; that the embarkation of the regiment to which he belonged was delayed for three weeks, and entreated her, if she could forgive him, to follow him to Cork without delay, that they might "part in love and kindness, and then come what might, he would demane himself like a man, and die asy," which he assured her he could not do without embracing her once more.

Cathleen listened to her husband's letter with

clasped hands and drawn breath, but quiet in her nature, she gave no other signs of emotion than a few large tears which trickled slowly down her cheeks. "And will I see him again?" she exclaimed; "poor fellow! poor boy! I knew the heart of him was sore for me! and who knows, Nancy dear, but they'll let me go out with him to the foreign parts? Oh! sure they wouldn't be so hard-hearted as to part man and wife that way!"

After a hurried consultation with her neighbours, who sympathised with her as only the poor sympathise with the poor, a letter was indited by Nancy and sent by the carrier that night, to inform her husband that she purposed setting off for Cork the next blessed morning, being Tuesday, and as the distance was about forty-eight miles English, she reckoned on reaching that city by Wednesday afternoon; for as she had walked to Clonmell and back (about twenty

miles) that same day, without feeling fatigued at all, “*to signify*,” Cathleen thought there would be no doubt that she could walk to Cork in less than two days. In this sanguine calculation she was, however, overruled by her more experienced neighbours, and by their advice appointed Thursday as the day on which her husband was to expect her, “God willing.”

Cathleen spent the rest of the day in making preparations for her journey : she set her cabin in order, and made a small bundle of a few articles of clothing belonging to herself and her husband. The watch and the guinea she wrapped up together, and crammed into the toe of an old shoe, which she deposited in the said bundle, and the next morning, at “sparrow chirp,” she arose, locked her cabin door, carefully hid the key in the thatch, and with a light expecting heart commenced her long journey.

It is worthy of remark, that this poor woman,

who was called upon to play the heroine in such a strange tragedy, and under such appalling circumstances, had nothing heroic in her exterior : nothing that in the slightest degree indicated strength of nerve or superiority of intellect. Cathleen was twenty-three years of age, of a low stature, and in her form rather delicate than robust : she was of ordinary appearance ; her eyes were mild and dove-like, and her whole countenance, though not absolutely deficient in intelligence, was more particularly expressive of simplicity, good temper, and kindness of heart.

It was summer, about the end of June : the days were long, the weather fine, and some gentle showers rendered travelling easy and pleasant. Cathleen walked on stoutly towards Cork, and by the evening she had accomplished, with occasional pauses of rest, nearly twenty-one miles. She lodged at a little inn by the road side, and the following day set forward again, but soon felt stiff

with the travel of two previous days: the sun became hotter, the ways dustier; and she could not with all her endeavours get farther than Rathcormuck, eighteen miles from Cork. The next day, unfortunately for poor Cathleen, proved hotter and more fatiguing than the preceding. The cross road lay over a wild country, consisting of low bogs and bare hills. About noon she turned aside to a rivulet bordered by a few trees, and sitting down in the shade, she bathed her swollen feet in the stream: then overcome by heat, weakness, and excessive weariness, she put her little bundle under her head for a pillow, and sank into a deep sleep.

On waking she perceived with dismay that the sun was declining: and on looking about, her fears were increased by the discovery that her bundle was gone. Her first thought was that the good people, (i. e. *the fairies*) had been there and stolen it away; but on examining farther she plainly perceived large foot-prints in the soft bank,

and was convinced it was the work of no unearthly marauder. Bitterly reproaching herself for her carelessness, she again set forward ; and still hoping to reach Cork that night, she toiled on and on with increasing difficulty and distress, till as the evening closed her spirits failed, she became faint, foot-sore and hungry, not having tasted any thing since the morning but a cold potatoe and a draught of buttermilk. She then looked round her in hopes of discovering some habitation, but there was none in sight except a lofty castle on a distant hill, which raising its proud turrets from amidst the plantations which surrounded it, glimmered faintly through the gathering gloom, and held out no temptation for the poor wanderer to turn in there and rest. In her despair she sat her down on a bank by the road side, and wept as she thought of her husband.

Several horsemen rode by, and one carriage and four attended by servants, who took no farther

notice of her than by a passing look ; while they went on their way like the priest and the Levite in the parable, poor Cathleen dropped her head despairingly on her bosom. A faintness and torpor seemed to be stealing like a dark cloud over her senses, when the fast approaching sound of footsteps roused her attention, and turning, she saw at her side a man whose figure, too singular to be easily forgotten, she recognized immediately : it was Halloran the Pedlar.

Halloran had been known for thirty years past in all the towns and villages between Waterford and Kerry. He was very old, he himself did not know his own age ; he only remembered that he was a “ tall slip of a boy ” when he was one of the —— regiment of foot, and fought in America in 1778. His dress was strange, it consisted of a woollen cap, beneath which strayed a few white hairs, this was surmounted by an old military cocked hat, adorned with a few fragments of tar-

nished gold lace ; a frieze great coat with the sleeves dangling behind, was fastened at his throat, and served to protect his box of wares which was slung at his back ; and he always carried a thick oak stick or *kippeen* in his hand. There was nothing of the infirmity of age in his appearance : his cheek, though wrinkled and weather-beaten, was still ruddy : his step still firm, his eyes still bright : his jovial disposition made him a welcome guest in every cottage, and his jokes, though not equal to my Lord Norbury's, were repeated and applauded through the whole country. Halloran was returning from the fair of Kilkenny, where apparently his commercial speculations had been attended with success, as his pack was considerably diminished in size. Though he did not appear to recollect Cathleen, he addressed her in Irish, and asked her what she did there : she related in a few words her miserable situation.

“ In troth, then, my heart is sorry for ye, poor

woman," he replied, compassionately ; " and what will ye do ?"

" An' what *can* I do?" replied Cathleen, disconsolately ; " and how will I even find the ford and get across to Cork, when I don't know where I am this blessed moment ?"

" Musha, then, it's little ye'll get there this night," said the pedlar, shaking his head.

" Then I'll lie down here and die," said Cathleen, bursting into fresh tears.

" Die ! ye wouldn't !" he exclaimed, approaching nearer ; " is it to me, Peter Halloran, ye spake that word ; and am I the man that would lave a faymale at this dark hour by the way-side, let alone one that has the face of a friend, though I cannot remember me of your name either, for the soul of me. But what matter for that ?"

" Sure, I'm Katty Reilly, of Castle Conn."

" Katty Reilly, sure enough ! and so no more talk of dying ; cheer up, and see, a mile farther

on, isn't there Biddy Hogan's? *Was*, I mane, if the house and all isn't gone : and it's there we'll get a bite and a sup, and a bed, too, -please God. So lean upon my arm, ma vourneen, it's strong enough yet."

So saying, the old man, with an air of gallantry, half rustic, half military, assisted her in rising ; and supporting her on one arm, with the other he flourished his kippeen over his head, and they trudged on together, he singing Cruiskeen-lawn at the top of his voice, "just," as he said, "to put the heart into her."

After about half an hour's walking, they came to two crossways, diverging from the high road : down one of these the pedlar turned, and in a few minutes they came in sight of a lonely house, situated at a little distance from the way-side. Above the door was a long stick projecting from the wall, at the end of which dangled a truss of straw, signifying that within there was entertain-

ment (good or bad) for man and beast. By this time it was nearly dark, and the pedlar going up to the door, lifted the latch, expecting it to yield to his hand ; but it was fastened within : he then knocked and called, but there was no answer. The building, which was many times larger than an ordinary cabin, had once been a manufactory, and afterwards a farm-house. One end of it was deserted, and nearly in ruins ; the other end bore signs of having been at least recently inhabited. But such a dull hollow echo rung through the edifice at every knock, that it seemed the whole place was now deserted.

Cathleen began to be alarmed, and crossed herself, ejaculating, "O God preserve us !" But the pedlar, who appeared well acquainted with the premises, led her round to the back part of the house, where there were some ruined out-buildings, and another low entrance. Here, raising his stout stick, he let fall such a heavy thump on the

door that it cracked again ; and a shrill voice from the other side demanded who was there ? After a satisfactory answer, the door was slowly and cautiously opened, and the figure of a wrinkled, half-famished, and half-naked beldam appeared, shading a rush candle with one hand. Halloran, who was of a fiery and hasty temper, began angrily : “ Why, then, in the name of the great devil himself, didn’t you open to us ? ” But he stopped suddenly, as if struck with surprise at the miserable object before him.

“ Is it Biddy Hogan herself, I see ! ” he exclaimed, snatching the candle from her hand, and throwing the light full on her face. A moment’s scrutiny seemed enough, and too much ; for, giving it back hastily, he supported Cathleen into the kitchen, the old woman leading the way, and placed her on an old settle, the first seat which presented itself. When she was sufficiently recovered to look about her, Cathleen could not help

feeling some alarm at finding herself in so gloomy and dreary a place. It had once been a large kitchen, or hall: at one end was an ample chimney, such as are yet to be seen in some old country houses. The rafters were black with smoke or rottenness: the walls had been wainscoted with oak, but the greatest part had been torn down for firing. A table with three legs, a large stool, a bench in the chimney propped up with turf sods, and the seat Cathleen occupied, formed the only furniture. Every thing spoke utter misery, filth, and famine—the very “abomination of desolation.”

“And what have ye in the house, Biddy, honey?” was the pedlar’s first question, as the old woman set down the light. “Little enough, I’m thinking.”

“Little! It’s nothing, then—no, not so much as a midge would eat have I in the house this blessed night, and nobody to send down to Balgowna.”

“No need of that, as our good luck would have it,” said Halloran, and pulling a wallet from under his loose coat, he drew from it a bone of cold meat, a piece of bacon, a lump of bread, and some cold potatoes. The old woman, roused by the sight of so much good cheer, began to blow up the dying embers on the hearth; put down among them the few potatoes to warm, and busied herself in making some little preparations to entertain her guests. Meantime the old pedlar, casting from time to time an anxious glance towards Cathleen, and now and then an encouraging word, sat down on the low stool, resting his arms on his knees.

“Times are sadly changed with ye, Biddy Hogan,” said he at length, after a long silence.

“Troth, ye may say so,” she replied, with a sort of groan. “Bitter bad luck have we had in this world, any how.”

“And where’s the man of the house? And where’s the lad, Barny?”

“Where are they, is it? Where should they be? may be gone down to Ahnamoe.”

“But what’s come of Barny? The boy was a stout workman, and a good son, though a devil-may-care fellow, too. I remember teaching him the soldier’s exercise with this very blessed stick now in my hand; and by the same token, him doubling his fist at me when he wasn’t bigger than the turf-kish yonder; aye, and as long as Barny Hogan could turn a sod of turf on my lord’s land, I thought his father and mother would never have wanted the bit and sup while the life was in him.”

At the mention of her son, the old woman looked up a moment, but immediately hung her head again.

“Barny doesn’t work for my lord now,” said she.

“And what for, then?”

The old woman seemed reluctant to answer—she hesitated.

“ Ye didn’t hear, then, how he got into trouble with my lord ; and how—myself doesn’t know the rights of it—but Barny had always a bit of wild blood about him ; and since that day he’s taken to bad ways, and the ould man’s ruled by him quite entirely ; and the one’s glum and fierce like—and t’other’s bothered ; and, oh ! bitter’s the time I have ’twixt ’em both ! ”

While the old woman was uttering these broken complaints, she placed the eatables on the table ; and Cathleen, who was yet more faint from hunger than subdued by fatigue, was first helped by the good-natured pedlar to the best of what was there : but, just as she was about to taste the food set before her, she chanced to see the eyes of the old woman fixed upon the morsel in her hand with such an envious and famished look, that from a sudden impulse of benevolent feeling, she instantly held it out to her. The woman started, drew back her extended hand, and gazed at her wildly.

“What is it then ails ye?” said Cathleen, looking at her with wonder; then to herself, “hunger’s turned the wits of her, poor soul! Take it—take it, mother,” added she aloud: “eat, good mother; sure there’s plenty for us all, and to spare,” and she pressed it upon her with all the kindness of her nature. The old woman eagerly seized it.

“God reward ye,” said she, grasping Cathleen’s hand, convulsively, and retiring to a corner, she devoured the food with almost wolfish voracity.

While they were eating, the two Hogans, father and son, came in. They had been setting snares for rabbits and game on the neighbouring hills; and evidently were both startled and displeased to find the house occupied; which, since Barny Hogan’s disgrace with “my lord,” had been entirely shunned by the people round about. The old man gave the pedlar a sulky welcome. The

son, with a muttered curse, went and took his seat in the chimney, where, turning his back, he set himself to chop a billet of wood. The father was a lean stooping figure, "bony, and gaunt, and grim:" he was either deaf, or affected deafness. The son was a short, brawny, thickset man, with features not naturally ugly, but rendered worse than ugly by an expression of lowering ferocity disgustingly blended with a sort of stupid drunken leer, the effect of habitual intoxication.

Halloran stared at them awhile with visible astonishment and indignation, but pity and sorrow for a change so lamentable, smothered the old man's wrath; and as the eatables were by this time demolished, he took from his side pocket a tin flask of whiskey, calling to the old woman to boil some water "screeching hot," that he might make what he termed "a jug of stiff punch—enough to make a cat *spake*." He offered to share it with his hosts, who did not decline drink-

ing; and the noggin went round to all but Cathleen, who, feverish with travelling, and, besides, disliking spirits, 'would not taste it. The old pedlar, reconciled to his old acquaintances by this show of good fellowship, began to grow merry under the influence of his whiskey-punch: he boasted of his late success in trade, showed with exultation his almost empty pack, and taking out the only two handkerchiefs left in it, threw one to Cathleen, and the other to the old woman of the house; then slapping his pocket, in which a quantity of loose money was heard to jingle, he swore he would treat Cathleen to a good breakfast next morning; and threw a shilling on the table, desiring the old woman would provide "stirabout for a dozen," and have it ready by the first light.

Cathleen listened to this rhodomontade in some alarm; she fancied she detected certain suspicious glances between the father and son, and began to feel an indescribable dread of her company. She

arose from the table, urging the pedlar good-humouredly to retire to rest, as they intended to be up and away so early next morning : then concealing her apprehensions under an affectation of extreme fatigue and drowsiness, she desired to be shown where she was to sleep. The old woman lighted a lanthorn, and led the way up some broken steps into a sort of loft, where she showed her two beds standing close together ; one of these she intimated was for the pedlar, and the other for herself. Now Cathleen had been born and bred in an Irish cabin, where the inmates are usually lodged after a very promiscuous fashion ; our readers, therefore, will not wonder at the arrangement. Cathleen, however, required that, if possible, some kind of skreen should be placed between the beds. The old hag at first replied to this request with the most disgusting impudence ; but Cathleen insisting, the beds were moved asunder, leaving a space of about two feet

between them ; and after a long search a piece of old frieze was dragged out from among some rubbish, and hung up to the low rafters, so as to form a curtain or partition half-way across the room. Having completed this arrangement, and wished her “ a sweet sleep and a sound, and lucky dreams,” the old woman put the lanthorn on the floor, for there was neither chair nor table, and left her guest to repose.

Cathleen said her prayers, only partly undressed herself, and lifting up the worn-out coverlet, lay down upon the bed. In a quarter of an hour afterwards the pedlar staggered into the room, and as he passed the foot of her bed, bid God bless her, in a low voice. He then threw himself down on his bed, and in a few minutes, as she judged by his hard and equal breathing, the old man was in a deep sleep.

All was now still in the house, but Cathleen could not sleep. She was feverish and restless ;

her limbs ached, her head throbbed and burned undefinable fears beset her fancy; and whenever she tried to compose herself to slumber, the faces of the two men she had left below flitted and glared before her eyes. A sense of heat and suffocation, accompanied by a parching thirst, came over her, caused, perhaps, by the unusual closeness of the room. This feeling of oppression increased till the very walls and rafters seemed to approach nearer and close upon her all around. Unable any longer to endure this intolerable smothering sensation, she was just about to rise and open the door or window, when she heard the whispering of voices. She lay still and listened. The latch was raised cautiously,—the door opened, and the two Hogans entered: they trod so softly that, though she saw them move before her, she heard no foot-fall. They approached the bed of Halloran, and presently she heard a dull heavy blow, and then sounds—appalling sickening sounds

—as of subdued struggles and smothered agony, which convinced her that they were murdering the unfortunate pedlar.

Cathleen listened, almost congealed with horror, but she did not swoon: her turn, she thought, must come next, though in the same instant she felt instinctively that her only chance of preservation was to counterfeit profound sleep. The murderers, having done their work on the poor Pedlar, approached her bed, and threw the gleam of their lanthorn full on her face; she lay quite still, breathing calmly and regularly. They brought the light to her eye-lids, but they did not wink or move;—there was a pause, a terrible pause, and then a whispering;—and presently Cathleen thought she could distinguish a third voice, as of expostulation, but all in so very low a tone that though the voices were close to her she could not hear a word that was uttered. After some moments, which appeared an age of agonising suspense, the

wretches withdrew, and Cathleen was left alone, and in darkness. Then, indeed, she felt as one ready to die: to use her own affecting language, “the heart within me,” said she, “melted away like water, but I was resolute not to swoon, and I *did not*. I knew that if I would preserve my life, I must keep the sense in me, and *I did*.”

Now and then she fancied she heard the murdered man move, and creep about in his bed, and this horrible conceit almost maddened her with terror: but she set herself to listen fixedly, and convinced her reason that all was still—that all was over.

She then turned her thoughts to the possibility of escape. The window first suggested itself: the faint moon-light was just struggling through its dirty and cobwebbed panes: it was very small, and Cathleen reflected, that besides the difficulty, and, perhaps, impossibility of getting through, it must be some height from the ground: neither could she tell on which side of the house it was

situated, nor in what direction to turn, supposing she reached the ground : and, above all, she was aware that the slightest noise must cause her instant destruction. She thus resolved upon remaining quiet.

It was most fortunate that Cathleen came to this determination, for without the slightest previous sound the door again opened, and in the faint light, to which her eyes were now accustomed, she saw the head of the old woman bent forward in a listening attitude : in a few minutes the door closed, and then followed a whispering outside. She could not at first distinguish a word until the woman's sharper tones broke out, though in suppressed vehemence, with " If ye touch her life, Barny, a mother's curse go with ye ! enough's done."

" She'll live, then, to hang us all," said the miscreant son.

" Sooner than that, I'd draw this knife across

her throat with my own hands ; and I'd do it again and again, sooner than they should touch your life, Barny, jewel : but no fear, the creature's asleep or dead already, with the fright of it."

The son then said something which Cathleen could not hear ; the old woman replied,

" Hisht ! I tell ye, no,—no ; the ship's now in the Cove of Cork that's to carry her over the salt seas far enough out of the way : and haven't we all she has in the world ? and more, didn't she take the bit out of her own mouth to put into mine ?"

The son again spoke inaudibly ; and then the voices ceased, leaving Cathleen uncertain as to her fate.

Shortly after the door opened, and the father and son again entered, and carried out the body of the wretched pedlar. They seemed to have the art of treading without noise, for though Cathleen saw them move, she could not hear a sound

of a footstep. The old woman was all this time standing by her bed, and every now and then casting the light full upon her eyes ; but as she remained quite still, and apparently in a deep calm sleep, they left her undisturbed, and she neither saw nor heard any more of them that night.

It ended at length—that long, long night of horror. Cathleen lay quiet till she thought the morning sufficiently advanced. She then rose, and went down into the kitchen : the old woman was lifting a pot off the fire, and nearly let it fall as Cathleen suddenly addressed her, and with an appearance of surprise and concern, asked for her friend the pedlar, saying she had just looked into his bed, supposing he was still asleep, and to her great amazement had found it empty. The old woman replied, that he had set out at early daylight for Mallow, having only just remembered that his business called him that way before he went to Cork. Cathleen affected great wonder

and perplexity, and reminded the woman that he had promised to pay for her breakfast.

“An’ so he did, sure enough,” she replied, “and paid for it too; and by the same token didn’t I go down to Balgowna myself for the milk and the *male* before the sun was over the tree tops; and here it is for ye, ma colleen:” so saying, she placed a bowl of stirabout and some milk before Cathleen, and then sat down on the stool opposite to her, watching her intently.

Poor Cathleen! she had but little inclination to eat, and felt as if every bit would choke her: yet she continued to force down her breakfast, and apparently with the utmost ease and appetite, even to the last morsel set before her. While eating, she inquired about the husband and son, and the old woman replied, that they had started at the first burst of light to cut turf in a bog, about five miles distant.

When Cathleen had finished her breakfast, she

returned the old woman many thanks for her kind treatment, and then desired to know the nearest way to Cork. The woman Hogan informed her that the distance was about seven miles, and though the usual road was by the high-way from which they had turned the preceding evening, there was a much shorter way across some fields which she pointed out. Cathleen listened attentively to her directions, and then bidding farewell with many demonstrations of gratitude, she proceeded on her fearful journey. The cool morning air, the cheerful song of the early birds, the dewy freshness of the turf, were all unnoticed and unfelt: the sense of danger was paramount, while her faculties were all alive and awake to meet it, for a feverish and unnatural strength seemed to animate her limbs. She stepped on, shortly debating with herself whether to follow the directions given by the old woman. The high-road appeared the safest; on the other hand, she was aware that the

slightest betrayal of mistrust would perhaps be followed by her destruction ; and thus rendered brave even by the excess of her fears, she determined to take the cross path. Just as she had come to this resolution, she reached the gate which she had been directed to pass through ; and without the slightest apparent hesitation, she turned in, and pursued the lonely way through the fields. Often did she fancy she heard footsteps stealthily following her, and never approached a hedge without expecting to see the murderers start up from behind it ; yet she never once turned her head, nor quickened nor slackened her pace ;

Like one that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

She had proceeded in this manner about three-quarters of a mile, and approached a thick and dark grove of underwood, when she beheld seated

upon the opposite stile an old woman in a red cloak. The sight of a human being made her heart throb more quickly for a moment ; but on approaching nearer, with all her faculties sharpened by the sense of danger, she perceived that it was no old woman, but the younger Hogan, the murderer of Halloran, who was thus disguised. His face was partly concealed by a blue handkerchief tied round his head and under his chin, but she knew him by the peculiar and hideous expression of his eyes : yet with amazing and almost incredible self-possession, she continued to advance without manifesting the least alarm, or sign of recognition ; and walking up to the pretended old woman, said in a clear voice, “ The blessing of the morning on ye, good mother ! a fine day for travellers like you and me ! ”

“ A fine day,” he replied, coughing and mumbling in a feigned voice, “ but ye see, hugh, ugh ! ye see I’ve walked this morning from the Cove

of Cork, jewel, and troth I'm almost spent, and I've a bad cowl'd, and a cough on me, as ye may hear," and he coughed vehemently. Cathleen made a motion to pass the stile, but the disguised old woman stretching out a great bony hand, seized her gown. Still Cathleen did not quail. "Musha, then, have ye nothing to give a poor ould woman?" said the monster, in a whining, snuffling tone.

"Nothing have I in this wide world," said Cathleen, quietly disengaging her gown, but without moving. "Sure it's only yesterday I was robbed of all I had but the little clothes on my back, and if I hadn't met with charity from others, I had starved by the way-side by this time."

"Och! and is there no place hereby where they would give a potatoe and a cup of cowl'd water to a poor old woman ready to drop on her road?"

Cathleen instantly pointed forward to the house

she had just left, and recommended her to apply there. "Sure they're good, honest people, though poor enough, God help them," she continued, "and I wish ye, mother, no worse luck than myself had, and that's a good friend to treat you to a supper—aye, and a breakfast too ; there it is, ye may just see the light smoke rising like a thread over the hill, just fornent ye ; and so God speed ye !"

Cathleen turned to descend the stile as she spoke, expecting to be again seized with a strong and murderous grasp ; but her enemy, secure in his disguise, and never doubting her perfect unconsciousness, suffered her to pass unmolested.

Another half-mile brought her to the top of a rising ground, within sight of the high-road ; she could see crowds of people on horseback and on foot, with cars and carriages passing along in one direction ; for it was, though Cathleen did not then know it, the first day of the Cork Assizes.

As she gazed, she wished for the wings of a bird that she might in a moment flee over the space which intervened between her and safety; for though she could clearly see the high-road from the hill on which she stood, a valley of broken ground at its foot, and two wide fields still separated her from it; but with the same unflinching spirit, and at the same steady pace, she proceeded onwards: and now she had reached the middle of the last field, and a thrill of new-born hope was beginning to flutter at her heart, when suddenly two men burst through the fence at the farther side of the field, and advanced towards her. One of these she thought at the first glance resembled her husband, but that it *was* her husband himself was an idea which never entered her mind. Her imagination was possessed with the one supreme idea of danger and death by murderous hands; she doubted not that these were the two Hogans in some new disguise, and silently recom-

mending herself to God, she steeled her heart to meet this fresh trial of her fortitude ; aware, that however it might end, it *must* be the last. At this moment one of the men throwing up his arms, ran forward, shouting her name, in a voice—a dear and well-known voice, in which she *could* not be deceived :—it was her husband !

The poor woman, who had hitherto supported her spirits and her self-possession, stood as if rooted to the ground, weak, motionless, and gasping for breath. A cold dew burst from every pore ; her ears tingled, her heart fluttered as though it would burst from her bosom. When she attempted to call out, and raise her hand in token of recognition, the sounds died away, rattling in her throat ; her arm dropped powerless at her side ; and when her husband came up, and she made a last effort to spring towards him, she sank down at his feet in strong convulsions.

Reilly, much shocked at what he supposed the

effect of sudden surprise, knelt down and chafed his wife's temples; his comrade ran to a neighbouring spring for water, which they sprinkled plentifully over her: when, however, she returned to life, her intellects appeared to have fled for ever, and she uttered such wild shrieks and exclamations, and talked so incoherently, that the men became exceedingly terrified, and poor Reilly himself almost as distracted as his wife. After vainly attempting to soothe and recover her, they at length forcibly carried her down to the inn at Balgowna, a hamlet about a mile farther on, where she remained for several hours in a state of delirium, one fit succeeding another with little intermission.

Towards evening she became more composed, and was able to give some account of the horrible events of the preceding night. It happened, opportunely, that a gentleman of fortune in the neighbourhood, and a magistrate, was riding by

late that evening on his return from the Assizes at Cork, and stopped at the inn to refresh his horse. Hearing that something unusual and frightful had occurred, he alighted, and examined the woman himself, in the presence of one or two persons. Her tale appeared to him so strange and wild from the manner in which she told it, and her account of her own courage and sufferings so exceedingly incredible, that he was at first inclined to disbelieve the whole, and suspected the poor woman either of imposture or insanity. He did not, however, think proper totally to neglect her testimony, but immediately sent off information of the murder to Cork. Constables with a warrant were despatched the same night to the house of the Hogans, which they found empty, and the inmates already fled: but after a long search, the body of the wretched Halloran, and part of his property, were found concealed in a stack of old chimneys among the ruins; and this proof of guilt was decisive.

The country was instantly *up*; the most active search after the murderers was made by the police, assisted by all the neighbouring peasantry; and before twelve o'clock the following night, the three Hogans, father, mother, and son, had been apprehended in different places of concealment, and placed in safe custody. Meantime the Coroner's inquest having sat on the body, brought in a verdict of wilful murder.

As the judges were then at Cork, the trial came on immediately; and from its extraordinary circumstances, excited the most intense and general interest. Among the property of poor Halloran discovered in the house, were a pair of shoes and a cap which Cathleen at once identified as belonging to herself, and Reilly's silver watch was found on the younger Hogan. When questioned how they came into his possession, he sullenly refused to answer. His mother eagerly, and as if to shield her son, confessed that she was the person

who had robbed Cathleen in the former part of the day, that she had gone out on the Carrick road to beg, having been left by her husband and son for two days without the means of support ; and finding Cathleen asleep, she had taken away the bundle, supposing it to contain food ; and did not recognize her as the same person she had robbed, till Cathleen offered her part of her supper.

The surgeon, who had been called to examine the body of Halloran, deposed to the cause of his death ;—that the old man had been first stunned by a heavy blow on the temple, and then strangled. Other witnesses deposed to the finding of the body : the previous character of the Hogans, and the circumstances attending their apprehension ; but the principal witness was Cathleen. She appeared, leaning on her husband, her face was ashy pale, and her limbs too weak for support ; yet she, however, was perfectly collected, and gave her testimony with that precision, simplicity, and modesty,

peculiar to her character. When she had occasion to allude to her own feelings, it was with such natural and heart-felt eloquence that the whole court was affected ; and when she described her rencontre at the stile, there was a general pressure and a breathless suspense : and then a loud murmur of astonishment and admiration fully participated by even the bench of magistrates. The evidence was clear and conclusive ; and the jury, without retiring, gave their verdict, guilty—Death.

When the miserable wretches were asked, in the usual forms, if they had any thing to say why the awful sentence should not be passed upon them, the old man replied by a look of idiotic vacancy, and was mute—the younger Hogan answered sullenly, “ Nothing :” the old woman, staring wildly on her son, tried to speak ; her lips moved, but without a sound—and she fell forward on the bar in strong fits.

At this moment Cathleen rushed from the arms

of her husband, and throwing herself on her knees, with clasped hands, and cheeks streaming with tears, begged for mercy for the old woman. "Mercy, my lord judge!" she exclaimed. "Gentlemen, your honours, have mercy on her. She had mercy on me! She only did *their* bidding. As for the bundle, and all in it, I give it to her with all my soul, so it's no robbery. The grip of hunger's hard to bear; and if she hadn't taken it then, where would I have been now? Sure they would have killed me for the sake of the watch, and I would have been a corpse before your honours this moment. O mercy! mercy for her! or never will I sleep asy on this side of the grave!"

The judge, though much affected, was obliged to have her forcibly carried from the court, and justice took its awful course. Sentence of death was pronounced on all the prisoners; but the woman was reprieved, and afterwards transported.

The two men were executed within forty-eight hours after their conviction, on the Gallows Green. They made no public confession of their guilt, and met their fate with sullen indifference. The awful ceremony was for a moment interrupted by an incident which afterwards furnished ample matter for wonder and speculation among the superstitious populace. It was well known that the younger Hogan had been long employed on the estate of a nobleman in the neighbourhood ; but having been concerned in the abduction of a young female, under circumstances of peculiar atrocity, which for want of legal evidence could not be brought home to him, he was dismissed ; and, finding himself an object of general execration, he had since been skulking about the country, associating with housebreakers and other lawless and abandoned characters. At the moment the hangman was adjusting the rope round his neck, a shrill voice screamed from the midst of the crowd,

“ Barny Hogan ! do ye mind Grace Power, and the last words ever she spoke to ye ? ” There was a general movement and confusion ; no one could or would tell whence the voice proceeded. The wretched man was seen to change countenance for the first time, and raising himself on tiptoe, gazed wildly round upon the multitude : but he said nothing ; and in a few minutes he was no more.

The reader may wish to know what has become of Cathleen, our *heroine*, in the true sense of the word. Her story, her sufferings, her extraordinary fortitude, and pure simplicity of character, made her an object of general curiosity and interest : a subscription was raised for her, which soon amounted to a liberal sum ; they were enabled to procure Reilly’s discharge from the army, and with a part of the money, Cathleen, who, among her other perfections, was exceedingly pious after the fashion of her creed and country, founded yearly masses for the soul of the poor

pedlar ; and vowed herself to make a pilgrimage of thanksgiving to St. Gobnate's well. Mr. L., the magistrate who had first examined her in the little inn at Balgowna, made her a munificent present ; and anxious, perhaps, to offer yet farther amends for his former doubts of her veracity, he invited Reilly, on very advantageous terms, to settle on his estate, where he rented a neat cabin, and a *handsome* plot of potatoe ground. There Reilly and his Cathleen were living ten years ago, with an increasing family, and in the enjoyment of much humble happiness ; and there, for aught I know to the contrary, they may be living at this day.

THE INDIAN MOTHER.

THE INDIAN MOTHER.*

There is a comfort in the strength of love,
Making that pang endurable, which else
Would upset the brain—or break the heart.

Wordsworth.

THE monuments which human art has raised to human pride or power may decay with that power, or survive to mock that pride ; but sooner or later they perish—their place knows them not. In the aspect of a ruin, however imposing in itself, and however magnificent or dear the associations con-

* This little tale (written in 1830) is founded on a striking incident related in Humboldt's narrative. The facts remain unaltered.

nected with it, there is always something sad and humiliating, reminding us how poor and how frail are the works of man, how unstable his hopes, and how limited his capacity compared to his aspirations! But when man has made to himself monuments of the works of God; when the memory of human affections, human intellect, human power, is blended with the immutable features of nature, they consecrate each other, and both endure together to the end. In a state of high civilization, man trusts to the record of brick and marble—the pyramid, the column, the temple, the tomb:

“ Then the bust

And altar rise—then sink again to dust.”

In the earlier stages of society, the isolated rock—the mountain, cloud-encircled—the river, rolling to its ocean-home—the very stars themselves—were endued with sympathies, and constituted the first,

as they will be the last, witnesses and records of our human destinies and feelings. The glories of the Parthenon shall fade into oblivion; but while the heights of Thermopylæ stand, and while a wave murmurs in the gulph of Salamis, a voice shall cry aloud to the universe—"Freedom and glory to those who can dare to die!—woe and everlasting infamy to him who would enthrall the unconquerable spirit!" 'The Coliseum with its sanguinary trophies is crumbling to decay; but the islet of Nisida, where Brutus parted with his Portia—the steep of Leucadia, still remain fixed as the foundations of the earth; and lasting as the round world itself shall be the memories that hover over them! As long as the waters of the Hellespont flow between Sestos and Abydos, the fame of the love that perished there shall never pass away. A traveller, pursuing his weary way through the midst of an African desert—a barren, desolate, and almost boundless solitude—found a gigantic sculp-

tured head, shattered and half-buried in the sand ; and near it the fragment of a pedestal, on which these words might be with pain deciphered : “ *I am Ozymandias, King of kings ; look upon my works, ye mighty ones, and despair !* ” Who was Ozymandias ?—where are now his works ?—what bond of thought or feeling, links his past with our present ? The Arab, with his beasts of burthen, tramples unheeding over these forlorn vestiges of human art and human grandeur. In the wildest part of the New Continent, hidden amid the depths of interminable forests, there stands a huge rock, hallowed by a tradition so recent that the man is not yet grey-headed who was born its contemporary ; but that rock, and the tale which consecrates it, shall carry down to future ages a deep lesson—a moral interest lasting as itself—however the aspect of things and the conditions of people change around it. Henceforth no man shall gaze on it with careless eye ; but each shall whisper to his

own bosom—"What is stronger than love in a mother's heart?—what more fearful than power wielded by ignorance?—or what more lamentable than the abuse of a beneficent name to purposes of selfish cruelty?"

Those vast regions which occupy the central part of South America, stretching from Guinea to the foot of the Andes, overspread with gigantic and primeval forests, and watered by mighty rivers—those solitary wilds where man appears unessential in the scale of creation, and the traces of his power are few and far between—have lately occupied much of the attention of Europeans; partly from the extraordinary events and unexpected revolutions which have convulsed the nations round them; and partly from the researches of enterprising travellers who have penetrated into their remotest districts. But till within the last twenty years these wild regions have been unknown, except through the means of the Spanish

and Portuguese priests, settled as missionaries along the banks of the Orinoco and the Paraguay. The men thus devoted to utter banishment from all intercourse with civilized life, are generally Franciscan or Capuchin friars, born in the Spanish Colonies. Their pious duties are sometimes voluntary, and sometimes imposed by the superiors of their order; in either case their destiny appears at first view deplorable, and their self-sacrifice sublime; yet, when we recollect that these poor monks generally exchanged the monotonous solitude of the cloister for the magnificent loneliness of the boundless woods and far-spreading savannahs, the sacrifice appears less terrible; even where accompanied by suffering, privation, and occasionally by danger. When these men combine with their religious zeal some degree of understanding and enlightened benevolence, they have been enabled to enlarge the sphere of knowledge and civilization, by exploring the productions and

geography of these unknown regions; and by collecting into villages and humanizing the manners of the native tribes, who seem strangely to unite the fiercest and most abhorred traits of savage life, with some of the gentlest instincts of our common nature. But when it has happened that these priests have been men of narrow minds and tyrannical tempers, they have on some occasions fearfully abused the authority entrusted to them; and being removed many thousand miles from the European settlements and the restraint of the laws, the power they have exercised has been as far beyond control as the calamities they have caused have been beyond all remedy and all relief.

Unfortunately for those who were trusted to his charge, Father Gomez was a missionary of this character. He was a Franciscan friar of the order of Observance, and he dwelt in the village of San Fernando, near the source of the Orinoco, whence

his authority extended as president over several missions in the neighbourhood of which San Fernando was the capital. The temper of this man was naturally cruel and despotic ; he was wholly uneducated, and had no idea, no feeling, of the true spirit of christian benevolence : in this respect, the savages whom he had been sent to instruct and civilize were in reality less savage and less ignorant than himself.

Among the passions and vices which Father Gomez had brought from his cell in the convent of Angostara, to spread contamination and oppression through his new domain, were pride and avarice ; and both were interested in increasing the number of his converts, or rather, of his slaves. In spite of the wise and humane law of Charles the Third, prohibiting the conversion of the Indian natives by force, Gomez, like others of his brethren in the more distant missions, often accomplished his purpose by direct violence. He was accustomed to

go, with a party of his people, and lie in wait near the hordes of unreclaimed Indians : when the men were absent he would forcibly seize on the women and children, bind them, and bring them off in triumph to his village. There, being baptized and taught to make the sign of the cross, they were *called* Christians, but in reality were slaves. In general, the women thus detained pined away and died ; but the children became accustomed to their new mode of life, forgot their woods, and paid to their Christian master a willing and blind obedience ; thus in time they became the oppressors of their own people.

Father Gomez called these incursions, *la conquista espiritual*—the conquest of souls.

One day he set off on an expedition of this nature, attended by twelve armed Indians ; and after rowing some leagues up the river Guaviare, which flows into the Orinoco, they perceived, through an opening in the trees, and at a little distance from

the shore, an Indian hut. It is the custom of these people to live isolated in families; and so strong is their passion for solitude, that when collected into villages they frequently build themselves a little cabin at a distance from their usual residence, and retire to it, at certain seasons, for days together. The cabin of which I speak was one of these solitary *villas*—if I may so apply the word. It was constructed with peculiar neatness, thatched with palm leaves, and overshadowed with cocoa trees and laurels; it stood alone in the wilderness, embowered in luxuriant vegetation, and looked like the chosen abode of simple and quiet happiness. Within this hut a young Indian woman (whom I shall call Guahiba, from the name of her tribe) was busied in making cakes of the cassava root, and preparing the family meal, against the return of her husband, who was fishing at some distance up the river; her eldest child, about five or six years old, assisted her; and from time to time,

while thus employed, the mother turned her eyes, beaming with fond affection, upon the playful gambols of two little infants, who, being just able to crawl alone, were rolling together on the ground, laughing and crowing with all their might.

Their food being nearly prepared, the Indian woman looked towards the river, impatient for the return of her husband. But her bright dark eyes, swimming with eagerness and affectionate solicitude, became fixed and glazed with terror when, instead of him she so fondly expected, she beheld the attendants of Father Gomez, creeping stealthily along the side of the thicket towards her cabin. Instantly aware of her danger (for the nature and object of these incursions were the dread of all the country round) she uttered a piercing shriek, snatched up her infants in her arms, and, calling on the other to follow, rushed from the hut towards the forest. As she had considerably the start of her pursuers, she would probably have escaped,

and have hidden herself effectually in its tangled depths, if her precious burthen had not impeded her flight; but thus encumbered she was easily overtaken. Her eldest child, fleet of foot and wily as the young jaguar, escaped to carry to the wretched father the news of his bereavement, and neither father nor child were ever more beheld in their former haunts.

Meantime, the Indians seized upon Guahiba—bound her, tied her two children together, and dragged her down to the river, where Father Gomez was sitting in his canoe, waiting the issue of the expedition. At the sight of the captives his eyes sparkled with a cruel triumph; he thanked his patron saint that three more souls were added to his community; and then, heedless of the tears of the mother, and the cries of her children, he commanded his followers to row back with all speed to San Fernando.

There Guahiba and her infants were placed in a

but under the guard of two Indians ; some food was given to her, which she at first refused, but afterwards, as if on reflection, accepted. A young Indian girl was then sent to her—a captive convert of her own tribe, who had not yet quite forgotten her native language. She tried to make Guahiba comprehend that in this village she and her children must remain during the rest of their lives, in order that they might go to heaven after they were dead. Guahiba listened, but understood nothing of what was addressed to her ; nor could she be made to conceive for what purpose she was torn from her husband and her home, nor why she was to dwell for the remainder of her life among a strange people, and against her will. During that night she remained tranquil, watching over her infants as they slumbered by her side ; but the moment the dawn appeared she took them in her arms and ran off to the woods. She was immediately brought back ; but no sooner were the eyes

of her keepers turned from her than she snatched up her children, and again fled;—again—and again! At every new attempt she was punished with more and more severity; she was kept from food, and at length repeatedly and cruelly beaten. In vain!—apparently she did not even understand why she was thus treated; and one instinctive idea alone, the desire of escape, seemed to possess her mind and govern all her movements. If her oppressors only turned from her, or looked another way, for an instant, she invariably caught up her children and ran off towards the forest. Father Gomez was at length wearied by what he termed her “blind obstinacy;” and, as the only means of securing all three, he took measures to separate the mother from her children, and resolved to convey Guahiba to a distant mission, whence she should never find her way back either to them or to her home.

In pursuance of this plan, poor Guahiba, with

her hands tied behind her, was placed in the bow of a canoe. Father Gomez seated himself at the helm, and they rowed away.

The few travellers who have visited these regions agree in describing a phenomenon, the cause of which is still a mystery to geologists, and which imparts to the lonely depths of these unappropriated and unviolated shades an effect intensely and indescribably mournful. The granite rocks which border the river, and extend far into the contiguous woods, assume strange, fantastic shapes; and are covered with a black incrustation, or deposit, which contrasted with the snow-white foam of the waves breaking on them below, and the pale lichens which spring from their crevices and creep along their surface above, give these shores an aspect perfectly funereal. Between these melancholy rocks—so high and so steep that a landing-place seldom occurred for leagues together—the canoe of Father

Gomez slowly glided, though urged against the stream by eight robust Indians.

The unhappy Guahiba sat at first perfectly unmoved, and apparently amazed and stunned by her situation ; she did not comprehend what they were going to do with her ; but after a while she looked up towards the sun, then down upon the stream ; and perceiving, by the direction of the one and the course of the other, that every stroke of the oar carried her farther and farther from her beloved and helpless children, her husband, and her native home, her countenance was seen to change and assume a fearful expression. As the possibility of escape, in her present situation, had never once occurred to her captors, she had been very slightly and carelessly bound. She watched her opportunity, burst the withes on her arms, with a sudden effort flung herself overboard, and dived under the waves ; but in another moment she rose again at a

considerable distance, and swam to the shore. The current, being rapid and strong, carried her down to the base of a dark granite rock which projected into the stream ; she climbed it with fearless agility, stood for an instant on its summit, looking down upon her tyrants, then plunged into the forest, and was lost to sight.

Father Gomez, beholding his victim thus unexpectedly escape him, sat mute and thunderstruck for some moments, unable to give utterance to the extremity of his rage and astonishment. When, at length, he found voice, he commanded his Indians to pull with all their might to the shore ; then to pursue the poor fugitive, and bring her back to him, dead or alive.

Guahiba, meantime, while strength remained to break her way through the tangled wilderness, continued her flight ; but soon exhausted and breathless, with the violence of her exertions, she was obliged to relax in her efforts, and at length sunk

down at the foot of a huge laurel tree, where she concealed herself, as well as she might, among the long, interwoven grass. There, crouching and trembling in her lair, she heard the voices of her persecutors hallooing to each other through the thicket. She would probably have escaped but for a large mastiff which the Indians had with them, and which scented her out in her hiding-place. The moment she heard the dreaded animal snuffing in the air, and tearing his way through the grass, she knew she was lost. The Indians came up. She attempted no vain resistance; but, with a sullen passiveness, suffered herself to be seized and dragged to the shore.

When the merciless priest beheld her, he determined to inflict on her such discipline as he thought would banish her children from her memory, and cure her for ever of her passion for escaping. He ordered her to be stretched upon that granite rock where she had landed from the canoe, on the sum-

mit of which she had stood, as if exulting in her flight,—THE ROCK OF THE MOTHER, as it has ever since been denominated—and there flogged till she could scarcely move or speak. She was then bound more securely, placed in the canoe, and carried to Javita, the seat of a mission far up the river.

It was near sunset when they arrived at this village, and the inhabitants were preparing to go to rest. Guahiba was deposited for the night in a large barn-like building, which served as a place of worship, a public magazine, and, occasionally, as a barrack. Father Gomez ordered two or three Indians of Javita to keep guard over her alternately, relieving each other through the night ; and then went to repose himself after the fatigues of his voyage. As the wretched captive neither resisted nor complained, Father Gomez flattered himself that she was now reduced to submission. Little could he fathom the bosom of this fond mother !

He mistook for stupor, or resignation, the calmness of a fixed resolve. In absence, in bonds, and in torture, her heart throbbed with but one feeling; one thought alone possessed her whole soul:—her children—her children—and still her children!

Among the Indians appointed to watch her was a youth, about eighteen or nineteen years of age, who, perceiving that her arms were miserably bruised by the stripes she had received, and that she suffered the most acute agony from the savage tightness with which the cords were drawn, let fall an exclamation of pity in the language of her tribe. Quick she seized the moment of feeling, and addressed him as one of her people.

“Guahibo,” she said, in a whispered tone, “thou speakest my language, and doubtless thou art my brother! Wilt thou see me perish without pity, O son of my people? Ah, cut these bonds which enter into my flesh! I faint with pain! I die!”

The young man heard, and, as if terrified, removed a few paces from her and kept silence. Afterwards, when his companions were out of sight, and he was left alone to watch, he approached, and said, "Guahiba!—our fathers were the same, and I may not see thee die; but if I cut these bonds, white man will flog me:—wilt thou be content if I loosen them, and give thee ease?" And as he spoke, he stooped and loosened the thongs on her wrists and arms; she smiled upon him languidly, and appeared satisfied.

Night was now coming on. Guahiba dropped her head on her bosom, and closed her eyes, as if exhausted by weariness. The young Indian, believing that she slept, after some hesitation laid himself down on his mat. His companions were already slumbering in the porch of the building, and all was still.

Then Guahiba raised her head. It was night—dark night—without moon or star. There was no

sound, except the breathing of the sleepers around her, and the humming of the mosquitoes. She listened for some time with her whole soul ; but all was silence. She then gnawed the loosened thongs asunder with her teeth. Her hands once free, she released her feet ; and when the morning came she had disappeared. Search was made for her in every direction, but in vain ; and Father Gomez, baffled and wrathful, returned to his village.

The distance between Javita and San Fernando, where Guahiba had left her infants, is twenty-five leagues in a straight line. A fearful wilderness of gigantic forest trees, and intermingling underwood, separated these two missions ;—a savage and awful solitude, which, probably, since the beginning of the world, had never been trodden by human foot. All communication was carried on by the river ; and there lived not a man, whether Indian or European, bold enough to have attempted the route along the shore. It was the commence-

ment of the rainy season. The sky, obscured by clouds, seldom revealed the sun by day ; and neither moon nor gleam of twinkling star by night. The rivers had overflowed, and the lowlands were inundated. There was no visible object to direct the traveller ; no shelter, no defence, no aid, no guide. Was it Providence—was it the strong instinct of maternal love, which led this courageous woman through the depths of the pathless woods—where rivulets, swollen to torrents by the rains, intercepted her at every step ; where the thorny lianas, twining from tree to tree, opposed an almost impenetrable barrier ; where the mosquitoes hung in clouds upon her path ; where the jaguar and the alligator lurked to devour her ; where the rattle-snake and the water-serpent lay coiled up in the damp grass, ready to spring at her ; where she had no food to support her exhausted frame, but a few berries, and the large black ants which build their nests on the trees ? How directed—how sus-

tained—cannot be told : the poor woman herself could not tell. All that can be known with any certainty is, that the fourth rising sun beheld her at San Fernando ; a wild, and wasted, and fearful object ; her feet swelled and bleeding—her hands torn—her body covered with wounds, and emaciated with famine and fatigue ;—but once more near her children !

For several hours she hovered round the hut in which she had left them, gazing on it from a distance with longing eyes and a sick heart, without daring to advance : at length she perceived that all the inhabitants had quitted their cottages to attend vespers ; then she stole from the thicket, and approached, with faint and timid steps, the spot which contained her heart's treasures. She entered, and found her infants left alone, and playing together on a mat : they screamed at her appearance, so changed was she by suffering ; but when she called them by name, they knew her ten-

der voice, and stretched out their little arms towards her. In that moment, the mother forgot all she had endured—all her anguish, all her fears, every thing on earth but the objects which blessed her eyes. She sat down between her children—she took them on her knees—she clasped them in an agony of fondness to her bosom—she covered them with kisses—she shed torrents of tears on their little heads, as she hugged them to her. Suddenly she remembered where she was, and why she was there: new terrors seized her; she rose up hastily, and, with her babies in her arms, she staggered out of the cabin—fainting, stumbling, and almost blind with loss of blood and inanition. She tried to reach the woods, but too feeble to sustain her burthen, which yet she would not relinquish, her limbs trembled, and sank beneath her. At this moment an Indian, who was watching the public oven, perceived her. He gave the alarm by ringing a bell, and the people rushed

forth, gathering round Guahiba with fright and astonishment. They gazed upon her as if upon an apparition, till her sobs, and imploring looks, and trembling and wounded limbs, convinced them that she yet lived, though apparently nigh to death. They looked upon her in silence, and then at each other; their savage bosoms were touched with commiseration for her sad plight, and with admiration, and even awe, at this unexampled heroism of maternal love.

While they hesitated, and none seemed willing to seize her, or to take her children from her, Father Gomez, who had just landed on his return from Javita, approached in haste, and commanded them to be separated. Guahiba clasped her children closer to her breast, and the Indians shrunk back.

“What!” thundered the monk: “will ye suffer this woman to steal two precious souls from heaven?—two members from our community? See

ye not, that while she is suffered to approach them, there is no salvation for either mother or children?—part them, and instantly !”

The Indians, accustomed to his ascendancy, and terrified at his voice, tore the children of Guahiba once more from her feeble arms: she uttered nor word nor cry, but sunk in a swoon upon the earth.

While in this state, Father Gomez, with a cruel mercy, ordered her wounds to be carefully dressed: her arms and legs were swathed with cotton bandages; she was then placed in a canoe, and conveyed to a mission, far, far off, on the river Esmeralda, beyond the Upper Orinoco. She continued in a state of exhaustion and torpor during the voyage; but after being taken out of the boat and carried inland, restoratives brought her back to life, and to a sense of her situation. When she perceived, as reason and consciousness returned, that she was in a strange place, un-

knowing how she was brought there—among a tribe who spoke a language different from any she had ever heard before, and from whom, therefore, according to Indian prejudices, she could hope nor aid nor pity ;—when she recollected that she was far from her beloved children ;—when she saw no means of discovering the bearing or the distance of their abode—no clue to guide her back to it :—*then*, and only then, did the mother's heart yield to utter despair ; and thenceforward refusing to speak or to move, and obstinately rejecting all nourishment, thus she died.

The boatman, on the river Atabapo, suspends his oar with a sigh as he passes the ROCK OF THE MOTHER. He points it out to the traveller, and weeps as he relates the tale of her sufferings and her fate. Ages hence, when these solitary regions have become the seats of civilization, of power, and intelligence ; when the pathless wilds, which poor Guahiba traversed in her anguish, are re-

placed by populous cities, and smiling gardens, and pastures, and waving harvests,—still that dark rock shall stand, frowning o'er the stream ; tradition and history shall preserve its name and fame ; and when even the pyramids, those vast, vain monuments to human pride, have passed away, it shall endure, to carry down to the end of the world the memory of the Indian Mother.

MUCH COIN, MUCH CARE.

A DRAMATIC PROVERB.

WRITTEN FOR

HYACINTHE, EMILY, CAROLINE, AND EDWARD.

CHARACTERS.

DICK, the Cobbler, a very honest man, and very merry withal, much given to singing.

MARGERY, his wife, simple and affectionate, and one of the best women in the world.

LADY AMARANTHE, a fine lady, full of airs and affectation, but not without good feeling.

MADemoiselle JUSTINE, her French maid, very like other French maids.

The SCENE lies partly in the Garret of the Cobbler, and partly in LADY AMARANTHE'S Drawing-room.

MUCH COIN, MUCH CARE.

SCENE I.

A Garret meanly furnished ; several pairs of old shoes, a coat, hat, bonnet, and shawl hanging against the Wall. DICK is seated on a low stool in front. He works, and sings.

As she lay on that day

In the Bay of Biscay O !

Now that's what *I* call a good song ; but my wife, she can't abear them blusteration songs, she says ; she likes something tender and genteel, full of fine words. (*Sings in a mincing voice.*)

Vake, dearest, vake, and again united

Ve'll vander by the sea-he-he-e.

Hang me, if I can understand a word of it ! but when my wife sings it out with her pretty little mouth, it does one's heart good to hear her ; and I could listen to her for ever : but, for my own part, what I like is a song that comes thundering out with a meaning in it ! (*Sings, and flourishes his hammer with enthusiasm, beating time upon the shoe.*)

March ! march ! Eskdale and Tiviotdale,
All the blue bonnets are over the border !]

MARGERY—(*from within.*)

Dick ! Dick ! what a noise you do keep !

DICK.

A noise, eh ? Why, Meg, you didn't use to think it a noise : you used to like to hear me sing !

MARGERY—(*entering.*)

And so I did, and so I do. I loves music with

all my heart; but the whole parish will hear you if you go for to bawl out so monstrous loud.

DICK.

And let them ! who cares ?

[*He sings, she laughs.*]

MARGERY.

Nay, sing away if you like it !

DICK—(*stopping suddenly.*)

I won't sing another bit if you don't like it,
Meg.

MARGERY.

Oh, I do like ! Lord bless us ! not like it ! it sounds so merry ! Why, Dick, love, every body said yesterday that you sung as well as Mr. Thingumec at Sadler's Wells, and says they, " Who is that young man as sings like any nightingale ? "

and I says (*drawing herself up*), "That's my husband!"

DICK.

Ay! flummery!—But, Meg, I say, how did you like the wedding yesterday?

MARGERY.

Oh, hugely! such heaps of smart people, as fine as fivepence, I warrant; and such gay gowns and caps! and plenty to eat and drink!—But what I liked best was the walking in the gardens at Bagnigge Wells, and the tea, and the crumpets!

DICK.

And the punch!

MARGERY.

Yes—ha! ha! I could see you thought *that* good! and then the dancing!

DICK.

Ay, ay ; and there wasn't one amongst them that footed it away like my Margery. And folks says to me, " Pray, who is that pretty modest young woman as hops over the ground as light as a feather ?" says they ; and says I, " Why, that there pretty young woman is my wife, to be sure !"

MARGERY.

Ah, you're at your jokes, Dick !

DICK.

I'll be hanged then !

MARGERY--(*leaning on his shoulder.*)

Well, to be sure, we were happy yesterday. It's good to make holiday just now and then, but somehow I was very glad to come home to our own little room again. O Dick !--did you mind that Mrs. Pinchtoe, that gave herself such grand airs ?

—she in the fine lavender silk gown—that turned up her nose at me so, and all because she’s a master shoemaker’s wife ! and you are only—only—a cobbler !—(*sighs*) I wish *you* were a master shoemaker, Dick.

DICK.

That you might be a master shoemaker’s wife, hay ! and turn up your nose like Mrs. Pinchtoe ?

MARGERY—(*laughing.*)

No, no ; I have more manners.

DICK.

Would you love me better, Meg, if I were a master shoemaker ?

MARGERY.

No, I couldn’t love you better if you were a king ; and that you know, Dick ; and, after all, we’re happy now, and who knows what might be if he were to change ?

DICK.

Ay, indeed ! who knows ? you might grow into a fine lady like she over the way, who comes home o'nights just as we're getting up in the morning, with the flams flaring, and blazing like any thing ; and that puts me in mind——

MARGERY.

Of what, Dick ? tell me !

DICK.

Why, cousin Tom's wedding put it all out of my head last night ; but yesterday there comes over to me one of those fine bedizened fellows we see lounging about the door there, with a cocked hat, and things like stay laces dangling at his shoulder.

MARGERY.

What could he want, I wonder !

DICK.

O ! he comes over to me as I was just standing at the door below, a thinking of nothing at all, and singing Paddy O'Raffety to myself, and says he to me, " You cobbler fellor," says he, " don't you go for to keep such a bawling every morning, awakening people out of their first sleep," says he, " for if you do, my lord will have you put into the stocks," says he.

MARGERY.

The stocks ! O goodness gracious me ! and what for, pray ?

DICK—(*with a grin.*)

Why, for singing, honey ! So says I, " Hark'ee, Mr. Scrape-trencher, there go words to that bargain : what right have you to go for to speak in that there way to me ?" says I ; and says he, " We'll have you 'dited for a nuisance, fellor," says he.

MARGERY—(*clasping her hands.*)

A nuisance ! my Dick a nuisance ! O Lord a' mercy !

DICK.

Never fear, girl ; I'm a free-born Englishman, and I knows the laws well enough : and says I, "No more a fellor than yourself ; I'm an honest man, following an honest calling, and I don't care *that* for you nor your lord neither ; and I'll sing *when* I please, and I'll sing *what* I please, and I'll sing as loud as I please ; I will, by jingo !" and so he lifts me up his cane, and I says quite cool, "This house is my castle ; and if you don't take yourself out of that in a jiffey, why, I'll give your laced jacket such a dusting as it never had before in its life—I will."

MARGERY.

O, Dick ! you've a spirit of your own, I warrant. Well, and then ?

DICK.

Oh, I promise you he was off in the twinkling of a bed-post, and I've heard no more of him ; but I was determined to wake you this morning with a thundering song ; just to show 'em I didn't care for 'em—ha ! ha ! ha !

MARGERY.

Oh, ho ! that was the reason, then, that you bawled so in my ear, and frightened me out of my sleep—was it ? Oh, well, I forgive you ; but bless me ! I stand chattering here, and it's twelve o'clock, as I live ! I must go to market—(*putting on her shawl and bonnet.*) What would you like to have for dinner, Dick, love ? a nice rasher of bacon, by way of a relish ?

DICK—(*smacking his lips.*)

Just the very thing, honey.

MARGERY.

Well, give me the shilling, then.

DICK—(*scratching his head.*)

What shilling?

MARGERY.

Why, the shilling you had yesterday.

DICK—(*feeling in his pockets.*)

A shilling!

MARGERY.

Yes, a shilling. (*Gaily.*) To have meat, one must have money; and folks must eat as well as sing, Dick, love. Come, out with it!

DICK.

But suppose I haven't got it?

MARGERY.

How! what! you don't mean for to say that

the last shilling that you put in your pocket, just to make a show, is gone ?

DICK—(*with a sigh.*)

But I do, though—it's gone.

MARGERY.

What shall we do ?

DICK.

I don't know. (*A pause. They look at each other.*) Stay, that's lucky. Here's a pair of dancing pumps as belongs to old Mrs. Crusty, the baker's wife at the corner—

MARGERY—(*gaily.*)

We can't eat *them* for dinner, I guess.

DICK.

No, no ; but I'm just at the last stitch.

MARGERY.

Yes—

DICK—(*speaking and working in a hurry.*)

And so you'll take them home—

MARGERY.

Yes—

DICK.

And tell her I must have seven-pence halfpenny
for them. (*Gives them.*)

MARGERY—(*examining the shoes.*)

But, Dick, isn't that some'at extortionate, as a
body may say? seven-pence halfpenny!

DICK.

Why, here's heel-pieces, and a patch upon each
toe; one must live, Meg!

MARGERY.

Yes, Dick, love ; but so must other folks. Now I think seven-pence would be enough in all conscience—what do you say ?

DICK.

Well, settle it as you like ; only get a bit of dinner for us, for I'm as hungry as a hunter, I know.

MARGERY.

I'm going. Good bye, Dick !

DICK.

Take care of theeself—and don't spend the change in caps and ribbons, Meg .

MARGERY.

Caps and ribbons out of seven-pence ! Lord help the man ! ha, ha, ha ! (*She goes out.*)

DICK—(*calling after her.*)

And come back soon, d'ye hear? There she goes—hop, skip, and jump, down the stairs. Somehow, I can't abear to have her out of my sight a minute. Well, if ever there was a man could say he had a good wife, why, that's me myself—tho'f I say it—the cheerfulest, sweetest temperedst, cleanliest, lovingest woman in the whole parish, that never gives one an ill word from year's end to year's end, and deserves at least that a man should work hard for her—it's all I can do—and we must think for to-morrow as well as to-day. (*He works with great energy, and sings at the same time with equal enthusiasm.*)

Cannot ye do as I do?

Cannot ye do as I do?

Spend your money, and work for more;

That's the way that I do!

Tol de rol lol.

Re-enter MARGERY in haste.

MARG.—(*out of breath.*)

Oh, Dick, husband ! Dick, I say !

DICK.

Hay ! what's the matter now ?

MARGERY.

Here be one of those fine powdered laced fellows from over the way comed after you again.

DICK—(*rising.*)

An impudent jackanapes ! I'll give him as good as he brings.

MARGERY.

Oh, no, no ! he's monstrous civil now ; for he chucked me under the chin, and says he, “ My pretty girl ! ”

DICK.

Ho ! monstrous civil indeed, with a vengeance !

MARGERY.

And says he, “ Do you belong to this here house ? ” “ Yes, sir,” says I, making a curtsy, for I couldn’t do no less when he spoke so civil ; and says he, “ Is there an honest cobbler as lives here ? ” “ Yes, sir,” says I, “ my husband that is.” “ Then, my dear,” says he, “ just tell him to step over the way, for my Lady Amaranthe wishes to speak to him immediately.”

DICK.

A lady ? O Lord !

MARGERY.

Yes, so you must go directly. Here, take off’ your apron, and let me comb your hair a bit.

DICK.

What the mischief can a lady want with me ?
I've nothing to do with ladies, as I knows of.

MARGERY.

Why, she won't eat you up, I reckon.

DICK.

And yet I—I—I be afeard, Meg !

MARGERY.

Afeard of a lady ! that's a good one !

DICK.

Ay, just—if it were a man, I shouldn't care
a fig.

MARGERY.

But we've never done no harm to nobody in
our whole lives, so what is there to be afraid of ?

DICK.

Nay, that's true.

MARGERY.

Now let me help you on with your best coat. Pooh ! what is the man about ?—Why, you're putting the back to the front, and the front to the back, like Paddy from Cork, with his coat buttoned behind !

DICK.

My head do turn round, just for all the world like a peg-top.—A lady ! what *can* a lady have to say to me, I wonder ?

MARGERY.

May be, she's a customer.

DICK.

No, no, great gentlefolks like she never wears patched toes nor heel-pieces, I reckon.

MARGERY.

Here's your hat. Now let me see how you can make a bow. (*He bows awkwardly.*) Hold up your head—turn out your toes. That will do capital! (*She walks round him with admiration.*) How nice you look! there's ne'er a gentleman of them all can come up to my Dick.

DICK—(*hesitating.*)

But—a—a—Meg, you'll come with me, won't you, and just see me safe in at the door, eh?

MARGERY.

Yes, to be sure; walk on before, and let me look at you. Hold up your head—there, that's it!

DICK—(*marching.*)

Come along. Hang it, who's afraid?

[*They go out.*]

*Scene changes to a Drawing-room in the
House of* LADY AMARANTHE.

Enter LADY AMARANTHE, *leaning upon her
maid,* MADEMOISELLE JUSTINE.

LADY AMARANTHE.

Avancez un fauteuil, ma chère ! arrangez les coussins. (*JUSTINE settles the chair, and places a footstool.* LADY AMARANTHE, *sinking into the arm-chair with a languid air.*) Justine, I shall die, I shall certainly die ! I never can survive this !

JUSTINE.

Mon Dieu ! madame, ne parlez pas comme ça ! c'est m'enfoncer un poignard dans le cœur !

LADY AMARANTHE—(*despairingly.*)

No rest—no possibility of sleeping—

JUSTINE.

Et le medecin de madame, qui a ordonné la plus grande tranquillité—qui a même voulu que je me taisais—moi, par exemple !

LADY AMARANTHE.

After fatiguing myself to death with playing the agreeable to disagreeable people, and talking common-place to common-place acquaintance, I return home, to lay my aching head upon my pillow, and just as my eyes are closing, I start—I wake,—a voice that would rouse the dead out of their graves echoes in my ears ! In vain I bury my head in the pillow—in vain draw the curtains close—multiply defences against my window—change from room to room—it haunts me ! Ah ! I think I hear it still ! (*covering her ears*) it will certainly drive me distracted !

[*During this speech, JUSTINE has made sundry exclamations and gestures expressive of horror, sympathy, and commiseration.*]

JUSTINE.

Vraiment, c'est affreux.

LADY AMARANTHE.

In any more civilized country it never could have been endured—I should have had him removed at once; but here the vulgar people talk of laws!

JUSTINE.

Ah, oui, madame, mais il faut avouer que c'est ici un pays bien barbare, où tout le monde parle loi et métaphysique, et où l'on ne fait point de différence entre les riches et les pauvres.

LADY AMARANTHE.

But what provokes me more than all the rest is this unheard-of insolence! (*rises and walks about the room,*)—a cobbler too—a cobbler who presumes to sing, and to sing when all the rest of the world

is asleep ! This is the march of intellect with a vengeance !

JUSTINE.

C'est vrai, il ne chante que des marches et de gros chansons à boire—s'il chantait bien doucement quelque joli roman par exemple—(*She sings*)—*dormez, dormez, mes chers amours !*

LADY AMARANTHE.

Justine, did you send the butler over to request civilly that he would not disturb me in the morning ?

JUSTINE.

Qui, miladi, dat is, I have send John ; de butler he was went out.

LADY AMARANTHE.

And his answer was, that he would sing in spite of me, and louder than ever ?

JUSTINE.

Oui, miladi, le monstre ! il dit comme ça, dat
he will sing more louder den ever.

LADY AMARANTHE—(*sinking again into her chair.*)

Ah ! the horrid man !

JUSTINE.

Ah ! dere is no politesse, no more den dere is
police in dis country.

LADY AMARANTHE.

If Lord Amaranthe were not two hundred miles
off—but, as it is, I must find some remedy—let me
think—bribery, I suppose. Have they sent for
him ? I dread to see the wretch. What noise is
that ? allez voir, ma chère !

JUSTINE—(*goes and returns.*)

Madame, c'est justement notre homme, voulez-
vous qu'il entre ?

LADY AMARANTHE.

Oui, faites entrer. [*She leans back in her chair.*

JUSTINE—(*at the door.*)

Entrez, entrez toujours, dat is, come in, good mister.

Enter DICK. He bows ; and, squeezing his hat in his hands, looks round him with considerable embarrassment.

JUSTINE—(*to Lady Amaranthe.*)

Bah ! comme il sent le cuir, n'est-ce pas, madame ?

LADY AMARANTHE.

Faugh ! mes sels—ma vinaigrette, Justine—non, l'eau de Cologne, qui est là sur la table. (JUSTINE brings her some eau de Cologne ; she pours some upon her handkerchief, and applies it to her

temples and to her nose, as if overcome ; then, raising her eye-glass, she examines DICK from head to foot.) Good man—a—pray, what is your name ?

DICK—(*with a profound bow.*)

Dick, please your ladyship.

LADY AMARANTHE.

Hum—a—a—pray, Mr. Dick—

DICK.

Folks just call me plain Dick, my lady. I'm a poor honest cobbler, and no mister.

LADY AMARANTHE—(*pettishly.*)

Well, sir, it is of no consequence. You live in the small house over the way, I think ?

DICK.

Yes, ma'am, my lady, I does ; I rents the attics.

LADY AMARANTHE.

You appear a good civil sort of man enough. (*He bows.*) I sent my servant over to request that you would not disturb me in the night—or the morning, as you call it. I have very weak health—am quite an invalid—your loud singing in the morning just opposite to my windows——

DICK—(*eagerly.*)

Ma'am, I—I'm very sorry; I ax your ladyship's pardon; I'll never sing no more above my breath, if you please.

JUSTINE.

Comment ! c'est honnête, par exemple.

LADY AMARANTHE—(*surprised.*)

Then you did not tell my servant that you would sing louder than ever, in spite of me ?

DICK.

Me, my Lady? I never said no such thing.

LADY AMARANTHE.

This is strange; or is there some mistake? Perhaps you are not the same Mr. Dick?

DICK.

Why, yes, my lady, for that matter, I be the same Dick. (*Approaching a few steps, and speaking confidentially.*) I'll just tell your ladyship the whole truth, and not a bit of a lie. There comes an impudent fellow to me, and he tells me, just out of his own head, I'll be bound, that if I sung o' mornings, he would have me put in the stocks.

LADY AMARANTHE.

Good heavens!

JUSTINE—(*in the same tone.*)

Grands dieux !

DICK—(*with a grin.*)

Now the stocks is for a rogue, as the saying is. As for my singing, that's neither here nor there; but no jackanapes shall threaten *me*. I *will* sing if I please, (*sturdily,*) and I won't sing if I don't please; and (*lowering his tone*) I don't please, if it disturbs your ladyship. (*Retreating*) I wish your ladyship a good day, and better health.

LADY AMARANTHE

Stay ; you are not then the rude uncivil person I was told of ?

DICK.

I hopes I knows better than to do an uncivil thing by a lady.

[*Bows and retreats towards the door.*

LADY AMARANTHE.

Stay, sir—a—a—one word.

DICK.

Oh, as many as you please, ma'am ; I'm in no hurry.

LADY AMARANTHE—(*graciously.*)

Are you married ?

DICK—(*rubbing his hands with glee.*)

Yes, ma'am, I be ; and to as tight a bit of a wife as any in the parish.

JUSTINE.

Ah ! il paraît que ce monsieur Dick aime sa femme ! Est-il amusant !

LADY AMARANTHE.

You love her then ?

DICK.

Oh, then I do ! I love her with all my heart !
who could help it ?

LADY AMARANTHE.

Indeed ! and how do you live ?

DICK.

Why, bless you, ma'am, sometimes well, sometimes ill, according as I have luck and work. When we can get a bit of dinner, we eat it, and when we can't, why, we go without : or, may be, a kind neighbour helps us.

LADY AMARANTHE.

Poor creatures !

DICK.

Oh, not so poor neither, my lady ; many folks is worser off. I'm always merry, night and day ;

and my Meg is the good temperedst, best wife in the world. We've never had nothing from the parish, and never will, please God, while I have health and hands.

LADY AMARANTHE.

And you are happy ?

DICK.

As happy as the day is long.

LADY AMARANTHE—(*aside.*)

This is a lesson to me. Eh bien, Justine ! voilà donc notre sauvage !

JUSTINE.

Il est gentil ce monsieur Dick, et à present que je le regarde—vraiment il a une assez jolie tournure.

LADY AMARANTHE—(*with increasing interest.*)

Have you any children ?

DICK—(*with a sigh.*)

No, ma'am ; and that's the only thing as frets us.

LADY AMARANTHE.

Good heavens ! you do not mean to say you wish for them, and have scarce enough for yourselves ? how would you feed them ?

DICK.

Oh, I should leave Meg to feed them ; I should have nothing to do but to work for them. Providence would take care of us while they were little ; and, when they were big, they would help us.

LADY AMARANTHE—(*aside.*)

I could not have conceived this. (*She whispers JUSTINE, who goes out.*) (*To DICK.*) Can I do any thing to serve you ?

DICK.

Only, if your ladyship could recommend me any

custom ; I mend shoes as cheap as e'er a cobbler in London, though I say it.

LADY AMARANTHE.

I shall certainly desire that all my people employ you whenever there is occasion.

Re-enter JUSTINE, holding a purse in her hand.

DICK—(*bowing.*)

Much obliged, my lady ; I hopes to give satisfaction, but (*looking with admiration at LADY AMARANTHE'S foot as it rests on the footstool*) such a pretty, little, delicate, beautiful foot as yon, I never fitted in all my born days. It can't cost your ladyship much in shoe leather, I guess?

LADY AMARANTHE—(*smiling complacently.*)

Rather more than you would imagine, I fancy, my good friend.

JUSTINE.

Comment donc—ce Monsieur Dick, fait aussi des complimens à Madame? Il ne manque pas de goût,—(*aside*) et il sait ce qu'il fait, apparemment.

LADY AMARANTHE—(*glancing at her foot.*)

C'est à dire—il a du bon sens, et ne parle pas mal. (*She takes the purse.*) As you so civilly obliged me, you must allow me to make you some return.

DICK—(*putting his hand behind him.*)

Me, ma'am! I'm sure I don't want to be paid for being civil.

LADY AMARANTHE.

But as I have deprived you of a pleasure, my good friend, some amends surely—

DICK.

Oh, ma'am, pray don't mention it; my wife's a

little tired and sleepy sometimes of a morning, and if I didn't sing her out of bed, I do think she would, by chance, snooze away till six o'clock, like any duchess ; but a pinch or a shake or a kiss will do as well, may be : and (*earnestly*) she's, for all that, the best woman in the world.

LADY AMARANTHE—(*smiling.*)

I can believe it, though she *does* sleep till six o'clock like a duchess. Well, my good friend, there are five guineas in this purse ; the purse is my own work ; and I request you will present it to your wife from me, with many thanks for your civility.

DICK—(*confused.*)

Much obliged, much obliged, but I can't, I can't indeed, my lady. Five guineas ! O Lord ! I should never know what to do with such a power of money.

LADY AMARANTHE.

Your wife will not say the same, depend upon it ; she will find some use for it.

DICK.

My Meg, poor woman ! she never had so much money in all her life.

LADY AMARANTHE.

I must insist upon it ; you will offend me.

JUSTINE—(*taking the purse out of her lady's hand, and forcing it upon DICK.*)

Dieux ! est-il bête !—you no understand ?—It is de gold and de silver money (*laughing.*) Comme il a l'air ébahi !

DICK—(*putting up the money.*)

Many thanks, and I pray God bless your ladyship !

LADY AMARANTHE—(*gaily.*)

Good morning, Mr. Dick. Remember me to your wife.

DICK.

I will, my lady. I wish your ladyship, and you, miss, a good morning. (*To himself.*) Five guineas!—what will Meg say?—Now I'll be a master shoemaker. (*Going out in an ecstasy, he knocks his head against the wall.*)

LADY AMARANTHE.

Take care, friend. Montrez-lui la porte, Justine!

JUSTINE.

Mais venez donc, Monsieur Dick—par ici—et n'allez pas donner le nez contre la porte!

[DICK *follows* JUSTINE *out of the door, after making several bows.*

LADY AMARANTHE.

Poor man!—well, he's silenced—he does not look as if he would sing, morning or night, for the next twelve months.

Re-enter JUSTINE.

JUSTINE.

Voici Madame Mincetaille, qui vient pour essayer la robe-de-bal de madame.

LADY AMARANTHE.

Ah ! allons donc.

[*They go out.*]

The SCENE changes to the Cobbler's Garret.

Enter MARGERY, in haste ; a basket in her hand.

She looks about her.

MARGERY.

Not come back yet ! what can keep him, I wonder ! (*Takes off her bonnet and shawl.*) Well, I must get the dinner ready. (*Pauses, and looks anxious.*) But, somehow, I feel not easy in my mind. What could they want with him ?—Hark ! (*Goes to the door*) No—what a time he is ! But suppose they should 'dite him for a nuisance—O me ! or send him to the watchhouse—O my poor dear Dick ! I must go and see after him ! I must go this very instant moment ! (*Snatches up her bonnet.*) Oh, I hear him now ; but how slowly he comes up !

[*Runs to the door, and leads him in.*

Enter DICK.

MARGERY.

Oh, my dear, dear Dick, I am so glad you are come at last ! But how pale you look ! all I don't know how ! What's the matter ? why don't you speak to me, Dick, love ?

DICK—(*fanning himself with his hat.*)

Let me breathe, wife.

MARGERY.

But what's the matter ? where have you been ? who did you see ? what did they say to you ? Come, tell me quick.

DICK.

Why, Meg, how your tongue does gallop ! as if a man could answer twenty questions in a breath.

MARGERY.

Did you see the lady herself? Tell me that.

DICK—(*looking round the room suspiciously.*)

Shut the door first.

MARGERY.

There.

[*Shuts it.*

DICK.

Shut the other.

MARGERY.

The other?—There.

[*Shuts it.*

DICK.

Lock it fast, I say.

MARGERY.

There's no lock ; and that you know.

DICK—(*frightened.*)

No lock ;—then we shall all be robbed !

MARGERY.

Robbed of what ? Sure, there's nothing here for any one to rob ! You never took such a thing into your head before.

[*DICK goes to the door, and tries to fasten it.*

MARGERY—(*aside.*)

For sartain, he's bewitched—or have they given him something to drink ?—or, perhaps, he's ill. (*Very affectionately, and laying her hand on his shoulder.*) Are you not well, Dick, love ? Will you go to bed, sweetheart ?

DICK—(*gruffly.*)

No. Go to bed in the broad day !—the woman's cracked.

MARGERY—(*whimpering.*)

Oh, Dick, what in the world has come to you?

DICK.

Nothing—nothing but good, you fool. There—there—don't cry, I tell you.

MARGERY—(*wiping her eyes.*)

And did you see the lady?

DICK.

Ay, I seed her; and a most beautiful lady she is, and she sends her sarvice to you?

MARGERY.

Indeed! lauk-a-daisy! I'm sure I'm much obliged—but what did she say to you?

DICK.

Oh, she said this, and that, and t'other—a great deal.

MARGERY.

But what, Dick ?

DICK.

Why, she said—she said as how I sung so fine, she couldn't sleep o' mornings.

MARGERY.

Sleep o' mornings ! that's a good joke ! Let people sleep o' nights, I say.

DICK—(*solemnly.*)

But she can't, poor soul, she's very ill ; she has pains here, and pains there, and everywhere.

MARGERY.

Indeed ! poor lady ! then you mustn't disturb her no more, Dick, that's a sure thing.

DICK.

Ay, so I said ; and so she gave me this.

[*Takes out the purse, and holds it up.*

MARGERY—(*clapping her hands.*)

O goodness ! what a fine purse !—Is there any thing in it ?

DICK—(*chinks the money.*)

Do ye hear that ? Guess now.

MARGERY—(*timidly.*)

Five shillings, perhaps, eh ?

DICK.

Five shillings !—five guineas, girl.

MARGERY—(*with a scream.*)

Five guineas ! five guineas ! (*skips about*) tal, lal, la ! five guineas ! (*Runs, and embraces her husband.*) Oh, Dick ! we'll be so rich and so happy. I want a power of things. I'll have a new gown—lavender, shall it be ?—Yes, it shall be lavender ; and a dimity petticoat ; and a lace

cap, like Mrs. Pinchtoe's, with pink ribbons—how she will stare ! and I'll have two silver spoons, and a nutmeg-grater, and——

DICK.

Ho, ho, ho ! what a jabber ! din, din, din ! You'll have this, and you'll have that ! First, I'll have a good stock of neat's leather.

MARGERY.

Well, well, give me the purse ; I'll take care of it. [*Snatches at it.*

DICK.

No, thankee, *I'll* take care of it.

MARGERY—(*coaxing*).

You know I always keep the money, Dick !

DICK.

Ay, Meg, but I'll keep this, do ye mind ?

MARGERY.

What ! keep it all to yourself?—No, you won't ; an't I your wife, and haven't I a right ? I ax you that.

DICK.

Pooh ! don't be bothering me.

MARGERY.

Come, give it me at once, there's a dear Dick !

DICK.

What, to waste it all in woman's nonsense and frippery ? Don't be a fool ! we're rich, and we'll keep it safe.

MARGERY.

Why, where's the use of money but to spend ? Come, come, I *will* have it.

DICK.

Hey-day ! you will?—You shan't ; who's the master here, I say ?

MARGERY—(*passionately.*)

Why, if you come to that, who's the mistress here, I say?

DICK.

Now, Meg, don't you go for to provoke me

MARGERY.

Pooh! I defy you.

DICK—(*doubling his fist.*)

Don't you put me in a passion, Meg!

MARGERY.

Get along; I don't care that for you! (*snaps her fingers.*) You used to be my own dear Dick, and now you're a cross, miserly curmudgeon—

DICK—(*quite furious.*)

You will have it then! Why, then, take it, with a mischief; take that, and that, and that!

[*He beats her; she screams.*

MARGERY.

Oh ! oh ! oh !—pray don't—pray—(*Breaks from him, and throws herself into a chair.*) O Dick ! to go for to strike me ! O that I should ever see the day !—you cruel, unkind——Oh ! oh !

[*Covers her face with her apron, sobs, and cries ; and he stands looking at her sheepishly. A long pause.*]

DICK—(*in great agitation.*)

Eh, why ! women be made of eggshells, I do think. Why, Meg, I didn't hurt you, did I ? why don't you speak ? Now, don't you be sulky, come ; it wasn't much. A man is but flesh and blood, after all ; come, I say—I'll never get into a passion with you again to my dying day—I won't—come, don't cry ; (*tries to remove the apron ;*) come, kiss, and be friends. Won't you forgive your own dear Dick, won't you ? (*ready to cry*) She won't !—Here, here's the money, and the

purse and all—take it, do what you like with it. (*She shakes her head.*) What, you won't then? why, then, there—(*throws it on the ground.*) Deuce fetch me if ever I touch it again! and I wish my fingers had been burnt before ever I took it,—so I do! (*with feeling.*) We were so happy this morning, when we hadn't a penny to bless ourselves with, nor even a bit to eat; and now, since all this money has come to us of a sudden, why, it's all as one as if old Nick himself were in the purse. I'll tell you what, Meg, eh! shall I? Shall I take it back to the lady, and give our duty to her, and tell her we don't want her guineas, shall I, Meg? shall I, dear heart?

[*During the last few words MARGERY lets the apron fall from her face, looks up at him, and smiles.*]

DICK.

Oh, that's right, and we'll be happy again, and never quarrel more.

MARGERY.

No, never ! (*They embrace.*) Take it away, for I can't bear the sight of it.

DICK.

Take it *you* then, for you know, Meg, I said I would never touch it again ; and what I says, I says—and what I says, I sticks to.

[*Pushes it towards her with his foot.*]

MARGERY.

And so do I : and I vowed to myself that I wouldn't touch it, and I won't.

[*Kicks it back to him.*]

DICK.

How shall we manage then ? Oh, I have it. Fetch me the tongs here. (*Takes up the purse in the tongs, and holds it at arm's length.*) Now I'm going. So, Meg, if you repent, now's the time. Speak—or for ever hold your tongue.

MARGERY.

Me repent? No, my dear Dick ! I feel, somehow, quite light, as if a great weight were gone away from here. (*Laying her hands on her bosom.*) Money may be a good thing when it comes little by little, and we gain it honestly by our own hard work ; but when it comes this way, in a lump—one doesn't know how or why—it's quite too surprising, as one may say ;—it gets into one's head, like—the punch, Dick !

DICK.

Aye, and worser—turns it all the wrong way ; but I've done with both :—I'll have no more to say to drinking, and fine ladies, and purses o' money ;—we'll go and live in the stall round the corner, and I'll take to my work and my singing again—eh, Meg ?

MARGERY.

Bless you, my dear, dear Dick ! (*kisses him.*)

DICK.

Ay, that's as it should be:—so now come along. We never should have believed this, if we hadn't tried; but it's just what my old mother used to say—MUCH COIN, MUCH CARE.*

* It need hardly be observed that this little trifle was written exclusively for very young actors, to whom the style was adapted; and though below all criticism, it has been included here to gratify those for whom it was originally written, and as a memorial of past times. The subject is imitated from one of Théodore Leclercq's *Proverbes Dramatiques*.

THE END.

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